

CORK UNION WORKHOUSE.

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ABSTRACT

OF

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 5 March 1861—*for*,

COPY " of the Report of the Inspector appointed to hold an Investigation  
into the State of the CORK UNION WORKHOUSE, in the Months of April and  
May 1859, and of the Evidence taken before such Inspector, and of any  
Correspondence relating thereto."

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Peer Law Commission Office, }  
Dublin, 3 April 1861.

B. BANKS,  
Chief Clerk.

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(Mr. Butt.)

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Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,  
23 April 1861.

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COPY of the REPORT of the INSPECTOR appointed to hold an Investigation into the State of the COCK UNION WORKHOUSE, in the Months of April and May 1859, and of the EVIDENCE taken before such Inspector; and of CORRESPONDENCE relating thereto.

— No. 1. —

(No. 9471/59.)

EXTRACTS from *Gardiens' Minutes*, dated 13 April 1859.

THE Committee to whom the Circular of Dietary of the Poor Law Commissioners was submitted having seen a very extraordinary report of the Mayor in the Visitors' Book respecting the state of certain classes in the house, think it would be premature to enter into it until the Mayor's charges have been fully investigated; for which purpose we recommend that the Poor Law Commissioners be requested to direct Mr. O'Brien, Poor Law Inspector, to hold an investigation on oath as to the truth of the Mayor's statements; and that Mr. O'Brien be authorised to procure medical evidence, if he thinks it necessary.

The following from the Visitors' Book was read :

" I have this day minutely inspected the various divisions of this workhouse, and am desirous to place my opinion regarding the condition in which I found the establishment, the officials, and the inmates, upon record.

" I have the pleasure of stating that the buildings in every department—the dormitories, dining-halls, school-rooms, hospital wards, work-rooms, &c., were scrupulously clean, well lighted, ventilated, and conveniently supplied with suitable furniture and fittings. The yards for exercise are well kept and spacious, and the addition of ground for cultivation I esteem commendable in every way, as affording most healthful and instructive employment for the young, and moreover as supplying considerable support to the institution itself.

" The officials have appeared to me extremely efficient, and from their kind manner to be worthily selected for the charge of the destitute and friendless. The master of the boys' school seems to deserve special notice for the forward condition to which the poor children's education, under his care, has been brought. In the girls' school the very advanced class is creditable, but the lower appeared deficient. It has, however, been explained to me that some irregularity has grown up, owing to the head schoolmistress having been for several months away from the house; she has now been reinstated, and I hope to see all her pupils as creditable to her as those I have commended. The infant school gave me great pleasure, as they sang, under the guidance of their intelligent governess, their little lessons, with something of the heartiness and spirit of children not having yet lived in the house long enough to experience the poisonous effect of the system of diet to which I mean in particular to refer. The servants selected from the paupers appear tidy, obedient, and apprehensive, and would, I have no doubt, if the means could be commanded, of giving them some instruction in household labours, prove valuable domestics. Altogether, the management under the master and matron reflects great credit upon them for their good superintendence, direction and assiduity.

" The hospitals, male and female, which now contain about 700 patients, I have gone through with the utmost care, and the wards I have found perfectly clean, thoroughly well ventilated, and very pure. I have examined the beds and bedding, and think them comfortable, and the clothing sufficient, and, like everything else in the house, quite clean. In no instance did I detect any offensive or impure odour. The kitchen for their use is very good, and the meat, soap, and

other articles prepared there I tried, and they are excellent, and it is the only diet that I can unqualifiedly praise. I think if some of the advanced girls were drafted here to learn cookery, it would be very useful in qualifying them for service. The patients seem to be most attentively provided for, and I have no doubts are most skillfully treated by the experienced physicians who attend them.

"The inmates are all comfortably housed, and well clothed, and I now intend to make a few remarks about their diet. I am aware that the food of a work-house must necessarily not alone be considered as affording sustenance, but also as a test of destitution, so that the lazy and vicious may not prey upon the industrious and sometimes hardly pressed ratepayers. This test can however only be used with reference to those who have bodily strength to labour, if justice and humanity be consulted, therefore, three out of four of the classes in the house should be, from their physical state, entirely exempted from this trial; these are the sick, the aged and infirm, and the children. To drive them out of doors would be to destroy them; they have no option but remain in the house, whatever be their treatment; and not alone kindness, but the highest obligation binds those who are their guardians to provide for their health and sustenance. I have said that the sick are properly provided with good food, and the infirm have sufficient; although in my opinion it might be varied, and somewhat bettered at a slight expense; but I have been shocked—I may say appalled—from my observation of the state of the children, and the result of my inquiries have led me to the deliberate conclusion that it would be a mercy to close the gates of the union house against them, and let them attain the mercy of death, rather than be reared deformed, maimed, and diseased objects, through the system of feeding to which I have reason to believe their terrible state is attributable. For want of proper nutriment and change of diet, scrofula has so infected these young creatures, that there was scarcely one of them whom I examined that did not bear plain and frightful tokens that their blood had been wasted to that degree that the current which should have borne vigour and health to their frames, was only a medium of disseminating debility and disease, not to speak of some 50 children sent from this institution to the Blind Asylum, for ever lost to the first blessings which God poured upon creation, from this disease, engendered by the diet here; not to dwell on the cruel spectacle of the infirmary, where in every phase this shocking infection may be seen in its most revolting forms. I will only point attention to the children who are still able to attend school, as I have said, there is scarcely one of these not diseased; but besides 115 that can move about, and are not perfectly ruined, there are in an upper school-room 48 young creatures so stunted in growth and intellect, and awfully affected, that no humane man could look upon them without the deepest compassion. In the female school the same general remarks apply; but there are 92 girls still presentable, and 84 in the infant class; but there is another larzar department of 84, as fearful objects as those I have just described. There is no separate register of the deaths of children kept in the house, but I have been told, and can well believe it from what I have witnessed and detailed, that four out of every five die before they are adults, and that the survivor is, in the majority of instances, destroyed in constitution.

"Against the system which produces such results, I desire at once to make my warmest protest. I believe it could be remedied with little cost, or taking into account the increased hospital charges thus swelled, perhaps with a saving to the ratepayers. But into such a question I would not enter, where an issue of life and death is in the balance. I am certain that I need only call the attention of the humane gentlemen on the Board to these facts, and that they will liberally concur with me, and provide against the continuance of this disastrous and terrible condition, in which I have found these destitute and unfledged children.

(signed) "John Arnott,  
"Mayor of Cork."

"6 April 1859."

Proposed by T. R. Sarsfield; seconded by R. Butcher;

*Resolved—*

"That the Poor Law Commissioners be requested to order an inquiry on oath, to be instituted by some person wholly unconnected with this union, into the statements contained in the report of his worship the Mayor; and that the person to conduct the inquiry should be authorised to procure and to receive medical and other testimony, such as he shall deem to be necessary for the purposes of such inquiry."

This Resolution has the full concurrence of Mr. O'Brien, Poor Law Inspector.

— No. 2. —

(No. 9471/59.)

LETTER from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,  
19 April 1859.

Sir,

THE Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland have had under their consideration the resolution of the guardians of Cork Union of the 13th instant, requesting them to institute an inquiry, on oath, into certain statements written in the visitors' book, and signed by the Mayor of Cork, regarding the state of the children in the workhouse.

In compliance with the wishes of the guardians, and their suggestion that the inquiry should be made by some person wholly unconnected with the union, the Commissioners have entrusted the duty to their inspector, Dr. Brodie, who, as a Poor Law Inspector, possesses every necessary power for inquiry under the Poor Law Acts, and is at the same time a duly qualified medical man, and therefore peculiarly fitted to conduct an inquiry of this nature.

The statement of the Mayor that scrofula has been generated among the children by the poisonous effects of the system of diet, and that four out of five die before they are adults, demands some immediate remarks from the Commissioners.

The dietary of the Cork Union is now before the Commissioners in a printed form, which, as originally adopted and printed, contains ample allowances for inmates of all classes, including the children's classes, and in regard to the latter, exceeds the minimum standard laid down in the Commissioners' regulations.

It appears that in March 1858, in consequence of epidemics of hooping cough and measles, which prevailed for some weeks previously, the original dietary was altered on the written report and suggestion of the medical officers, and brought to the state in which it now stands, the stimulants made of Indian meal, and the porridge, or vegetable soup, being excluded, and replaced by bread and milk, both in very ample quantities.

The above facts appear upon documents already recorded in ordinary course in the office of the Commissioners, they feel assured that if it be true that scrofula has arisen from the system of diet in Cork Workhouse, it is not from any deficiency in the quantity of food as prescribed in the union dietary. The quality of the articles of food, and every other circumstance connected with the diet will, of course, be the subject of searching inquiry in the investigation about to be made.

As to the mortality of the children in the Cork Workhouse, this will also be made the subject of close and minute inquiry, as well as the present physical condition of the children; but the Commissioners feel bound, on this point likewise, to declare at once certain results derived from official documents already in their possession.

The average daily number of children lodged and maintained in the Cork Workhouse during the year ended 25th March 1859, was 622; of which number 90 may be classed as under two years of age; 82 between two and five; 91 between five and nine, and 359 between nine and 15. The total number of

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deaths

deaths in those classes during the year has been 77, or 12 per cent.; but 50 of those deaths were of children under two years of age, a class subject to great mortality everywhere, and especially in workhouses and all other public institutions.

The yearly rate of mortality, then, in the other classes under 15 years of age has been 27 in 532, or 5 per cent.; which is by no means an excessive rate in an establishment partaking so much the character of an hospital, and in which nearly two-thirds of the persons admitted are admitted in sickness, as the Commissioners know to be the case in Cork Union.

A return very recently obtained to show the mortality of deserted children in Irish workhouses, affords immediate means of stating, not only what has been the result in regard to this class in Cork Workhouse, but of comparing that result with the general result throughout Ireland.

From this return it appears that throughout Ireland, the number of deserted children relieved in workhouses during the year ended 31st December 1858, was 4,814, and that of these 206 died within the year. In Cork Workhouse, during the same period, there were 268 deserted children relieved, of whom 12 died within the year, or 4·5 per cent. in comparison with 4·3 per cent., the general average.

The Commissioners do not think that, in making the above statement, they are anticipating unnecessarily the inquiry about to be made, the result of which, when communicated, will receive their best attention; but they feel it to be due to the Guardians of Cork Union, as well as to the local administrators of the Poor Law in Ireland generally, to make it known at once how utterly at variance with the official returns recorded in their department is the supposed existence of an excessive mortality among children in workhouses attributable to the dietary generally in use in the Irish unions.

By order, &c.

B. Banks,  
Chief Clerk.

To the Clerk, Cork Union.

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— No. 3. —

(No. 9471/59.)

LETTER from the Commissioners to Dr. Bradie, Poor Law Inspector.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,  
19 April 1859.

Sir,

THE Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland, forward to you herewith the Minutes of Proceedings of the Board of Guardians of Cork Union on the 13th instant, containing a resolution requesting them to institute an inquiry into the statements made in a communication from the Mayor of Cork entered in the visitors' book, a copy of which is included in the Minutes, regarding the condition of the workhouse inmates generally, but especially referring to the state of the children; and the Commissioners request that you will have the goodness to proceed to Cork at your earliest convenience for the purpose of making inquiry in accordance with the application of the Board of Guardians.

You will perceive, from the terms of the enclosed copy of the letter which the Commissioners have addressed to the Board of Guardians, the grounds upon which the Commissioners deem it to be desirable that the investigation should be conducted by you; and you will also observe that the Commissioners have furnished the guardians with some data from official returns regarding the alleged excessive mortality among the children, and prevalence of scrofula assumed to have been occasioned by the dietary in use in the workhouse. A copy of the dietary, as arranged before the alterations suggested by the medical officers, is enclosed, with a copy of the present dietary.

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The Commissioners think it will be desirable that you should, if no impediment arises, examine the Mayor of Cork in the first instance, and ascertain from him the grounds of the opinion given by him as to the cause of scrofula with which children in the workhouse are affected, and the sources of his information as to the mortality among the children.

By order, &c. *B. Bonks*, Chief Clerk.

To Dr. Brodie,  
Poor Law Inspector, Tuam.

— No. 4. —

(No. 9981/59.)

EXTRACT from Guardians' Minutes, dated 20 April 1859.

READ letter of the Poor Law Commissioners, 19th April, No. 9471/59, stating that the Commissioners had entrusted the conduct of the inquiry into the Mayor's report to Dr. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.

Proposed by R. Butcher; seconded by R. S. Jameson;

*Resolved*,—That from the great importance of the matters at issue in the inquiry about to be instituted into the report of the Mayor, and the vast amount of public attention which it occupies, we would beg to suggest to the Poor Law Commissioners the necessity of sending two of their most experienced inspectors, one Poor Law Inspector and one medical inspector, to conduct this inquiry, in order that the public may have the fullest confidence in the result that may be arrived at, whatever that may be; and we would suggest the names of Mr. Crawford and Dr. Hill, as gentlemen known and enjoying the highest reputation in this locality.

Proposed by R. Butcher, seconded by J. N. Murphy;

*Resolved*,—That in order to procure the fullest evidence for the inquiry about to be instituted, we call upon Dr. Edward Townsend, one of the most experienced and able of our local physicians, to inspect and give evidence upon the dietary of the house, and the state of the children; and that if Dr. Townsend cannot attend, that two guardians be authorised to make a similar request to Drs. Tanner and S. Hobart.

— No. 5. —

(No. 10,992/59.)

TELEGRAM from the Mayor of Cork to the Commissioners.

Dublin Station, 23 April 1859.

From John Arnott, Mayor of Cork, to the Poor Law Commissioners of Ireland,  
Dublin.

Gentlemen,

In consequence of my position as chief magistrate of Cork, and entrusted with the preservation of the peace of the city, and also in consequence of being myself a candidate for the representation of the borough of Kinsale, I feel it would be impossible for me to attend at present at the investigation about to  
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take place into the matters alleged in my report in the visitors' book of the Cork Union Workhouse of the 6th instant. I would, therefore, earnestly request of you not to name too early a day for the investigation, and would suggest that the several elections should be allowed to pass over, after which, I think, the earliest possible day may be appointed.

— No. 6. —

(No. 10,002/59.)

LETTER from the Commissioners to the Mayor of Cork.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,  
23 April 1859.

Sir,

THE Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland acknowledge the receipt of your communication of this day's date, relating to the period at which the inquiry about to be held into the statements regarding the children in the Cork Union Workhouse, referred to in your recent report in the visitors' book, may be entered upon.

In reply the Commissioners have to state, that they will make known your wishes to Dr. Brodie, the inspector to whom the inquiry has been entrusted; but they cannot forbear at the same time stating, that it is of the greatest importance that in an inquiry of this nature, delay should be avoided as much as practicable.

Whatever time Dr. Brodie may fix for the inquiry, he will, no doubt, be anxious to consult your convenience, but the Commissioners do not themselves interfere with such arrangements on the part of their inspectors.

By order, &c.

To John Arnott, Esq.  
Mayor of Cork, Cork.

B. Banks,  
Chief Clerk.

— No. 7. —

(No. 9931/59.)

LETTER from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,  
23 April 1859.

Sir,

THE Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland, have had under their consideration the resolution passed at the meeting of the Board of Guardians, of Cork Union, on the 20th instant, in which the guardians, in reply to the Commissioners' letter of the 19th instant, suggest that the inquiry which is about to be made into the report of the Mayor of Cork, recently entered in the visitors' book, relating to the state of the children in the workhouse, should, considering the importance of the subject, be conducted by two inspectors, one medical, and one Poor Law Inspector.

In reference thereto, the Commissioners have to state, that they see no reason for countermanding the instructions already given to Dr. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector, to hold this investigation.

The Commissioners are fully sensible of the important character of the inquiry, and have perfect confidence in Dr. Brodie's ability to discharge the duty entrusted to him.

The Commissioners forward for the guardians' information, copies of correspondence which has passed between the Mayor of Cork and themselves, relative to the time of holding the inquiry.

By order, &c.

To the Clerk, Cork Union.

B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

— No. 8. —

(No. 9981/59.)

LETTER from the Commissioners to Dr. Brodie.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,  
23 April 1859.

Sir,

ADVANTING to their letter to you of the 19th instant, requesting you to proceed to Cork, for the purpose of making inquiry into the statements made in a communication from the Mayor of Cork, a copy of which is contained in the Minutes of Proceedings of the Board of Guardians of the Cork Union, on the 13th instant, the Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, forward to you the accompanying extract from the Guardians' Minutes, of the 20th instant, together with a copy of a letter which they have this day addressed to the Board of Guardians, on the subject of the proposed investigation.

In reference to the medical testimony, which appears likely to be produced on both sides of the question, you will of course not refuse to take any evidence which may be tendered; but the Commissioners are anxious that facts, which are of more material importance than opinions in such a case, should be most elicited.

The Commissioners forward for your information, copies of correspondence which has passed between the Mayor of Cork and themselves, relative to the time of holding the inquiry.

By order, &c.  
(signed) B. Banta, Chief Clerk.

To Dr. Brodie,  
Poor Law Inspector, Galway.

— No. 9. —

REPORT from Dr. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector, with Minutes of Evidence.

CORK UNION.

Gentlemen,

Limerick, 22 May 1859.

I HAVE the honour to report for your information, that, pursuant to the instructions conveyed to me in your letter of the 19th ultimo, I attended at the Cork Workhouse, on the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 16th and 17th instant, for the purpose of instituting the inquiry directed by you into the several statements recently recorded by the Mayor in the Visitors' Book of that institution, as to its general sanitary condition—the extent of disease prevailing amongst the children there, and the amount of mortality and sufferings alleged to have taken place amongst those classes, consequent on the system of dietary to which they had been exposed. The 9th and 17th instant were devoted by me to a close inspection of the several departments of the workhouse, and a personal examination of the physical condition of the children and other inmates; and the six intervening days were occupied in the reception of such evidence, medical and otherwise, as was produced before me, either in support or contradiction of the Mayor's statements.

The minutes of evidence taken by me during this unusually protracted investigation, are forwarded herewith for your consideration, and I shall now proceed to submit such observations thereon as seem to me likely to aid in promoting what I am persuaded is now the object of all the parties concerned, namely, a sound and satisfactory decision upon what has probably proved to be one of the most deeply interesting and important subjects of scientific inquiry and research which has arisen in any union since the introduction of the Poor Law system into this country.

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Some circumstances connected with this case, which preceded the institution of the official investigation confided to me by you, and upon which it does not now seem desirable that I should further dwell, would appear to have had the effect of exciting in connexion with it a large amount of local misunderstanding and somewhat angry difference of opinion, which it was at first to be apprehended might have had the effect of seriously impeding the dispassionate examination of the several important questions at issue; but I am sincerely happy to add, that as the inquiry progressed, the unreasonableness of allowing any secondary considerations of this kind to interfere with the temperate and business-like solution of a most important social problem, gradually came to be universally recognised, and I am glad to think that long before our proceedings had been brought to a close, the interest of all became absorbed in a simple desire to ascertain what defects experience had shown to exist in the present administrative arrangements in force in the Cork Union, and what remedies were likely to be applied to them, with the greatest probability of being attended with beneficial results.

The substance of the Mayor's report, founded upon the result of his examination of the workhouse on Wednesday, the 6th ultimo, may be reduced to the following heads:—

1st. That the general condition of the establishment as to cleanliness, ventilation, treatment of the sick, attention and humanity of the officers, was highly satisfactory.

2d. That, notwithstanding all these advantages, the children of both sexes presented an appalling appearance, owing to the almost universal prevalence amongst them of scrofulous affections, generated by the poisonous nature of their dietary.

3d. That as a consequence of this disease, so generated, four out of every five of the children died before becoming adults (15), while the survivors were so maimed and deteriorated in constitution by it, as to be totally useless for all the purposes of life.

4th. That a further illustration of the disastrous effects of the workhouse system was to be found in the fact, that 50 inmates were then supported by the Union at the Blind Asylum, who had permanently been deprived of sight by disease, resulting from the same cause.

Those several subjects I shall now take leave to advert to *seriatim*, as briefly as the circumstances will admit of my doing.

As I have already observed, I have closely and particularly inspected every part of this vast workhouse, and upon this branch of the case it merely becomes necessary for me to record my full concurrence in everything that has been remarked upon it by the Mayor. Notwithstanding the vast extent and complicated character of the institution, I everywhere found evidences of the utmost care and attention to the details of its management by the officers in charge. The several wards were one and all scrupulously clean, orderly, and as far as it was practicable, well ventilated. The state of the beds, bedding, clothing, &c., in use, seemed all equally free from objection.

Happening on the first day of my inspection (9th instant) to enter the hospital kitchen while the dinner meal of the inmates was in course of preparation, I had an opportunity of satisfying myself as to the quality of the provisions designed for use, and I am bound to add that never in the course of my tolerably extended experience have I tasted in any hospital, meat superior to what I found there. The beef-tea, rice (nicely baled in the shape of puddings), and indeed almost everything I observed connected with this department, appeared to me to be equally deserving of approval; and a subsequent inspection made by me, on the 17th, of the same department, fully confirmed my first favourable impression in relation to it. But it is right to add, that I collect from inquiry, as well as from the evidence adduced before me, that the quality of this particular article (meat) has undergone a considerable improvement since the month of March last, when the guardians adopted the advice addressed to them, and entered into a contract at a much higher price than had been previously paid.

I have also examined the Union accounts, to satisfy myself as to the condition of things antecedent to my visit, and from them I collect that the ordinary provision made by the guardians, under the guidance of the medical officers, for the wants

wants of the sick inmates appear to be regulated upon a scale of considerable liberality; thus in illustration of this I extract from the provision account for week ended 2d April (the week preceding the Mayor's visit), the particulars of expenditure upon four articles of comfort for the sick, viz.:—

|                |   | Quantity.  |   | Cost.      |
|----------------|---|------------|---|------------|
| Meat (Paupers) | - | 991 lbs.   | - | £.22 14 2½ |
| Wine "         | - | 54½ pts.   | - | 5 17 10    |
| Porter "       | - | 1,524 pts. | - | 7 17 1     |
| Whiskey "      | - | 42½ pts.   | - | 3 8 11     |
| TOTAL          |   |            |   | £.39 18 -¼ |

This week appears to be a fair sample of the ordinary state of things in the Cork Union, and establishes the fact, that under the four important heads enumerated, a union expenditure of upwards of 2,000 *l.* annually is at present incurred, an amount which is probably not exceeded (or equalled) in any other similar institution in the country, and which affords a clear indication that if the wants of the sick poor have not been fully consulted by the medical officers in charge, it has certainly been so from so want of readiness on the part of the guardians to afford them all necessary facilities for the purpose.

As regards the dietary of the several classes of inmates not maintained in the hospital department, and amounting at the present time to somewhat less than two-thirds of the entire number of inmates, I annex herewith (marked A) a copy of the scale now, and for a long time past, in force. It will be seen that, judged by the dietaries in use in most of the Irish Unions—even of the largest class—up to the date of the issue of your circular of the 31st March last, since which time a general revision of this subject has been in progress, it will bear a comparison with almost the best of them as to quantity and nutriment; and I cannot find that during the last few years, the guardians have in any instance failed to yield an immediate compliance with the recommendations made by the medical officers, either as to permanent or temporary alteration in the usual scale allowed, and which recommendations those officers must be always held strictly responsible for submitting, in writing, to the guardians, whenever in their judgment, circumstances arise which call for their adoption.

The sanitary condition of the healthy is, equally with the treatment of the sick, a part of the responsibility attached to the position of a workhouse medical officer; and it is desirable that upon this head no misconception should henceforth exist, as, in the event of any future neglect of so seriously important a duty, no apology should be accepted for its nonperformance.

It becomes absolutely necessary that this point should, on the present occasion, be clearly adverted to, and placed beyond all possibility of doubt, as from the evidence of one of the workhouse medical officers, Dr. W. Townsend, it would appear that he has entertained strong opinions upon the subject of the dietary generally, as well as the quality of some of the articles coming under his observation, which were never (previous to this inquiry) communicated to the Board of Guardians, who it is to be supposed would not have failed to receive his representations with the consideration to which they were entitled; and had Dr. W. Townsend not qualified the strong opinions which he has now placed on record, by the explanation that "his experience of workhouse disease has been comparatively brief, and that before taking any decided step to give effect to his views, he considered time and experience necessary to enable him to form an opinion, which would carry that weight which he might expect would influence a Board of Guardians in making a change of such importance as the alteration of the dietary;" it would probably become necessary for the Poor Law Commissioners to take into their serious consideration, whether he had not so failed in one of the most essential duties of his office, as to disentitle him to their further confidence.

The general quality of the articles composing the diet supplied to the workhouse has formed the subject of careful inquiry, as well as of close observation by me.

It would appear that, in times past, considerable grounds of complaint did exist in connexion with this subject; but that lately a desire on the part of the guardians to introduce improvements in this respect, principally by the accept-

ance of contracts effected on more liberal terms than heretofore, has had the effect of bringing about a better state of things.

The evidence of the master, storekeeper, and clerk, will be found to afford very full information on this point, as well as an explanation of the fact, that on the day the farinaceous soup was first seen by Dr. Callanan, it was found to be of the inferior description stated by him in his evidence. So far as my own personal observations extended, I have found the articles, both in use and in store, to be of fair quality of their respective kinds; and from the best inquiry I have been able to make, as well as from the reports submitted from time to time by the master to the Board of Guardians, and the recorded instances in which articles of an inferior kind have been returned to the contractors (superior articles being at the same time purchased at their expense) I am led to the conclusion that the master has faithfully discharged his duty in this respect, and that the abuses referred to by the Protestant chaplain and others, are traceable to the low prices at which contracts were formerly taken—for instance, beef at 2½d. per lb. At the same time, considering the great and paramount importance of at all times securing to the inmates of workhouses, a regular supply of good and wholesome food, the guardians cannot be too strongly impressed with their responsibility, to make only such contracts as are reasonably calculated to insure this, and to seeing that a rigid fulfilment of their contracts is duly enforced by their officers. Contracts which are clearly unremunerative to the parties making them, are rarely found to work satisfactorily, and should be always avoided by Boards of Guardians.

The second branch of this inquiry, namely, as to the general physical condition of the children in the workhouse,—the extent of scrofulous disease prevailing amongst them—the cause, or combined causes, that have tended to create or develop this malady, and the means best calculated to arrest its ravages, formed, as was of course to be anticipated, by far the most prominent feature in this investigation, and as you will perceive from a perusal of the evidence, these several questions have been treated by the very eminent professional gentlemen who were examined in reference to them, with an amount of ability, consideration, and research, reflecting the very highest credit upon themselves, and in every way worthy of the important bearing of the points at issue; and though, as was probably not unnatural, the opinions of these gentlemen will be found to differ upon some very material points, little difficulty can, I think, be experienced in drawing from the general body of their testimony and the facts adduced, and referred to by them, and elicited generally during the progress of the inquiry, practical conclusions sufficiently clear and definite to guide the guardians as to their future course.

As regards the general physical condition of the children, I have taken particular pains to satisfy myself as to the exact state of things, by two close personal examinations.

Passing over the nursery wards, the other children are distributed through seven separate departments, viz. :—

|                      |   |      |                 |   |      |
|----------------------|---|------|-----------------|---|------|
| Male healthy school  | - | (82) | Male hospital   | - | (49) |
| Male infirm school   | - | (27) | Infant school   | - | (70) |
| Female senior school | - | (89) | Female hospital | - | (46) |
| Female infirm school | - | (27) |                 |   |      |

The girls of the senior class and infant schools, about 150 in number, are located in a detached building, having a spacious playground connected with it, on the western side of the approach to the workhouse, and the general appearance and condition of the children in these two departments appear to me to be not bad. A few amongst them present marks of disease, while the great majority are, in my opinion, fairly developed for their years, and do not present that stunted and blighted appearance described by the Mayor in his report of the 6th ultimo.

The female infirm school-children are located in the body of the main building; they are 27 in number. This comprises nine cases of itch, nearly cured; four cases of scrofula, and the remainder is made up either of cases of general debility, or affections of a miscellaneous kind, such as partial loss of vision, &c.

These

These children receive the diet recommended in 1854 by the medical officers for the use of the aged and infirm inmates, and upon which they have been placed by the same authority. The diet consists of 1½ lb. of white bread and two pints of boiling-milk daily.

It being of course clearly understood, that it has always been perfectly open to the medical officers to remove to hospital, from time to time, such of those cases as the ordinary diet was not found applicable to.

In the female hospital (which occupies the portion of the original building designed as the general infirmary), are 46 children labouring under various affections. Of these, 21, or nearly one-half, are cases of undoubted scrofula, in some instances of a severe type; and there are 12 more labouring under affections of the eyes, as to the classification of which the medical gentlemen are not agreed in opinion—a point upon which it does not seem necessary or desirable that I should further dwell.

The boys (healthy and infirm) are located in the portion of the establishment known as the "Timber Building."

The healthy amount to 82, and of these, 10 present marks principally of cured scrofula, and to have eye affections more or less severe.

The general condition of these children, though perfectly clean, is decidedly inferior to that of the girls, though the diet of both is precisely the same. The latter, however, enjoy the advantages of superior accommodation, both as to house room and playground, as well as that of frequent change of air and of freedom from the bodily labour, both on the farm and in the workshops, to which the former are exposed.

Of the infirm boys (27 in number), about eight are labouring under scrofula; five have affections of the eye, the remainder various minor ailments.

These, like the girls of the same class, are placed on a bread-and-milk diet, and present on the whole but a middling appearance as to physical condition. Most of them have been for a considerable period inmates of the workhouse.

In the male hospital there are 38 boys, of these 22 are labouring under scrofula,—more severe in its form than I have ever before witnessed,—and several others have eye affections of one kind or the other.

This exhausts the subject of the classification and condition of the children of both sexes, and I shall now proceed to observe upon the evidence offered in relation to it.

That a large amount of scrofula, and that, too, in a great many instances, of the worst possible form, exists amongst the children of the Cork workhouse (more particularly the males), may be taken to be an established fact, and though as to the precise causes which have contributed to establish this, some difference of opinion prevails amongst the medical men who have inquired into the subject, it is abundantly clear that neither the dietary heretofore in use, nor any isolated circumstance can, taken singly, be held to explain it, and that if remedial measures be now addressed only to the dietary, or to any other particular point to which special importance may happen to be attached, the state of things described, and which every humane person must desire to see improved, is, in my opinion, certain to continue in just as active operation as it is at the present time.

The comparative freedom from this disease enjoyed in the various rural unions throughout the country, in nearly all of which the dietary has been considerably below that of Cork, as well as the many recorded and well-established instances in which the most liberal dietary has failed to prevent the spread of it, until attention has been directed to other circumstances, clearly indicate the necessity of seeking somewhere else, beside the dietary, for the causes which have contributed to bring about the state of things which now rivets so much public attention on the Cork Union.

In the intelligent and admirable evidence given by Doctor O'Connor, who, up to the end of 1856, had been senior medical attendant of the establishment since its opening, will be found much valuable information as to the existence of causes antecedent to the present time, which rendered it almost, if not absolutely, inevitable, that a very considerable extent of this form of disease and suffering should now be found in the institution; and when taken in connexion with this, it is remembered that the large reduction in numbers which has lately taken place, has been chiefly confined to the healthy classes, while the infirm and sick have remained behind; that the workhouse, in addition to still retaining

amongst its inmates the very worst sufferers, and the offspring of the very worst sufferers of the famine epoch, whose present diseased condition only reflects the misery and privations to which they were then exposed, has been, and still continues to be, made use of as the chief receptacle for all the sickness and want of a large and populous city like Cork; that an average population of about 2,000 human beings, more than one-third of whom are labouring under sickness, is maintained within its walls, contending with the disadvantages of a decidedly low, if not, as some insist, an absolutely unhealthy situation; and with the additional drawback of being surrounded at all points by a boundary wall of between 20 and 30 feet in height, as well as of an entire absence of sewerage, and of, as far as the male patients are concerned, a suitable building for the proper treatment of the sick, I am disposed to feel surprised, not that scrofula prevails in the Cork workhouse to the extent, and in the severe form I have described, but that it does not exist to a much greater degree.

Before taking leave of this subject, I may be permitted to observe, that I perfectly concur in opinion with Dr. O'Connor, that it has been an entire mistake to connect the scrofula prevailing amongst the children in the Cork Union workhouse with the dietary, in the relation of cause and effect.

The person who would take upon himself to pronounce a correct and impartial judgment should make diligent inquiry into many other matters. He should ascertain how those children came to be inmates; what was their physical condition then; what the constitution of their parents. He should, like Dr. O'Connor, go back to the terrible years of famine, and trace the effects of those dreary times of hunger and disease upon the constitutions of the survivors. He will find the most wide-spread destitution, taxing the utmost energies of those engaged in the administration of relief, to provide food and shelter for the countless thousands who stood in need of it. The visitation was so severe and general, that there was no time to provide sufficient accommodation for the throng of applicants for relief. The workhouse was necessarily for a time over-crowded, and the officers in charge were day and night engaged in admitting and discharging hundreds of persons, and in preparing food and clothing for thousands. Taxes were excessive; property was threatened with almost total absorption in rates; the whole country was panic-stricken and prostrate.

It is indisputable that the wretched poor clung to their miserable cabins and their few acres of land until hunger had almost done its deadly work—often until it had completed it. Fever, dysentery, ophthalmia, followed; and when the unfortunate victim was almost in the last stage of starvation and pestilence, he succumbed, and consented to accept relief in the workhouse (out-door relief was not given by the guardians of the Cork Union). His children suffered equally with him; they, however, rallied sooner and more frequently, while in a great majority of cases the parents could not be recovered from the effect of the sufferings they had already endured. Again: the children of those who died from the effects of famine and disease without being recipients of relief, died as out-door paupers, and all other orphans and deserted children were sent to the workhouse. These were too often mere skeletons, suffering under every form of disease—and spectacles of human suffering. Many died; a great number recovered from immediate death, but with injured and enfeebled constitutions—the seeds of permanent disease in some form, already developed, the consequence of the sufferings they had undergone or inherited from their unfortunate parents, who had equally suffered, or from both causes combined. It cannot be denied that the workhouse was not in those days what could be desired; some of the causes have been already touched upon; other reasons will readily present themselves to those who have had experience of the difficulties of the time. It was over-crowded; disease was rife in it; there was an impossibility of affording to classes, or even to individuals, all the care and attention their necessities demanded; and it is to be feared that some are now suffering from the effect of this state of things.

It must be admitted, that the workhouse has for years past poured out, to meet the demands for labour, thousands of young men and women: that the healthy and robust were first drained away; that this drain has gone on for years, and that now scarcely any remain but the feeble, the delicate, and all who have suffered some physical injury.

These are now the objects of unsparing criticism, without once considering the small fraction they form of the multitude who have been brought up in the workhouse

house, sent out trained and educated, benefiting society, and themselves useful members of it.

I shall now proceed to advert to the remedies which in my judgment the present condition of things suggests and imperatively calls for. While I am, as I before stated, firmly impressed with the conviction that it has been an entire mistake to connect the scrofula prevailing in this workhouse with the dietary, I take it there can be no doubt whatever that varied, wholesome, and nutritious food, besides being of course always desirable upon general sanitary grounds, will in this particular instance form a very necessary and important auxiliary to the other arrangements which I shall presently refer to, as being, in my opinion, absolutely necessary to counteract and neutralize the several agencies, past and present, which I conceive to have most actively contributed to the formation, development, and continuance of this disease.

Upon this point, and subject of course to my views being concurred in by the medical officers of the institution, I should take leave to suggest the following changes in the existing dietary of the healthy part of the house:—

The dietary of the able-bodied men and women I would leave untouched, and in the case of the aged and infirm, beyond substituting tea for milk at the breakfast meal, and giving meat-soup, and milk on alternate days for dinner, I am not aware that any particular necessity exists for altering present arrangements.

In the case of the infants (under two) I should most strongly recommend that first quality white bread be substituted for second.

For the class from two to nine I would continue the present bread diet, but I would substitute for the quart of skimmed milk, now allowed, new milk in the same quantity; and on three days in each week I would substitute meat-soup (substantially made) for one pint of the milk at dinner.

The healthy classes from 9 to 15 should, I think, on three days of the week get meat-soup for dinner, and on two other days I would recommend potatoes and milk for that meal.

The infirm school-children should continue on the present bread diet, but on four days in the week I would allow them good meat-soup for dinner, in lieu of milk.

These are the only dietetic changes which I am inclined to take leave to suggest, and, if they be adopted, I have no doubt they will be attended with beneficial sanitary results, provided they are accompanied by certain other changes to which I shall now advert, and without which, I feel, that in all substantial respects, the alteration of the dietary will fail to make any very sensible impression on the condition of the children.

In the first place, I consider it altogether hopeless to look for any mitigation of the terrible form in which this disease has manifested itself in the case of many of the boys, so long as they are sent for curative treatment to the ward at present assigned as the hospital accommodation for this class, namely, the ground-floor ward of the large detached building facing the girls' schools. This building, if used for the accommodation of the school boys, as the corresponding building on the opposite side has been employed for the school girls, would, I have no doubt, have served this purpose most admirably, and from the vast superiority it possesses over the "Timber Building," both as to playground and indoor accommodation, would, I am satisfied, have exercised an important and salutary influence on the general health and spirits of the children; but, for the purpose to which it has been applied, viz., as a hospital for the sick, it is not only wholly unsuited, but as regards one-third of it, viz., the ground-floor, where the scrofulous boys are now placed, and where the pressure as to numbers appears to have been always the greatest, I think it may be safely stated, that in position and circumstances, it not only presents an almost insurmountable impediment to the cure of malignant disease in it, but is directly calculated, from the poisonous nature of its atmosphere, to foster and propagate disease amongst the patients resorting to it for treatment.

The ward to which I refer, stands in close proximity to a wall about 30 feet in height, extending along its entire length on the eastern side, and, as it is on the southern side closely encompassed by the main building of the workhouse, it may be said, that though, as to windows and ventilators, everything that was possible has been done, the occupants are almost wholly unsupplied with fresh air, and left from day to day to breathe the impure atmosphere which the inmates

of a ward so circumstanced, and usually over 100 in number, cannot fail to create.

That children labouring under scrofula, and transferred to such a place as this for medical treatment, not only should not grow better, but should, despite of all diet and medical skill, gradually come to assume the condition in which I have found several of the inmates of this ward, does not in the least surprise me, and I think the guardians cannot be too warmly and energetically urged to abandon the present arrangements, and provide without delay for the male patients a suitable, convenient, and properly classified hospital.

This subject was, I understand, in the year 1856, brought under your notice by Mr. O'Brien, the inspector of the district, and was by you urged, but without success, on the notice of the guardians. It has now, in my humble judgment, grown to be a matter of absolute necessity, and as a site every way adapted for this purpose exists on the premises, I cannot suppose that the slightest difficulty will be now interposed in the way of carrying out so necessary a measure. In addition to this arrangement, I believe it to be absolutely necessary that provision should be made for giving to all the children frequent change of air and constant facilities for enjoying healthful recreation.

The yards at present appropriated to the use of the boys by no means afford this, and I think a piece of ground exclusively applicable to this purpose, should be at once procured, and that a portion of the day should be set apart for this object.

I think the hours of literary instruction should be limited to three hours daily; that none of the infirm children should ever be employed in the workshops; and that none of the healthy boys should be so employed, except for a limited period, say two or three hours on each alternate day.

I am also of opinion that the wooden clogs at present in use amongst the children (over nine) should be replaced by ordinary shoes, the former rendering it almost totally impossible for the children wearing them, to take that active recreation which I believe to be essential to their health.

To introduce an effective sewerage into this establishment, would probably involve an amount of expense which the guardians would not now be willing to embark in, but I think professional advice should be taken, and some immediate steps adopted for conveying away from the workhouse grounds the overflow of sewerage and surface water, which has recently, I understand, formed the subject of correspondence between the Board of Guardians and the directors of the Bandon Railway Company. This concludes the suggestions which it has appeared to me to be desirable that I should submit for your consideration, on the present occasion, and should you deem it well to adopt them, judging from from what I have seen of the general feeling of the Board, and the anxiety evinced by them to inform themselves as to whatever could be shown to be really the interest of the large number of children entrusted to their guardianship, I am convinced, they will be found disposed to afford the fullest co-operation and assistance, in giving effect to your views.

The next subject which I am called upon to advert to, has reference to the alleged mortality amongst the children, resulting from disease supposed to be engendered by the dietary.

From the evidence of the Mayor, it appears, that in referring to this subject in his original report, he made the allegation in question on the authority of a statement which he had heard made by a member of the Board of Guardians; but he added, that having since collected the statistics of the workhouse mortality, he was conducted to the conclusion that his original statement was under, instead of over, the actual number, and that if he had said 19/20ths instead of 4/5ths of the children died before attaining the age of 15, he would have been more correct.

It is possible that the mayor may have since satisfied himself that this conclusion was a hasty one, and was based upon fallacious premises; but as it has gone before the public, and has even been commented on by the press as correct, and as it is obviously a subject on which it is desirable that the public, and more especially the classes likely to have occasion to resort for relief to the workhouse, should be under no misapprehension, I must take leave to dwell for a while upon this topic, with a view to rendering the facts as clear as it is in my power to make them.

I annex

I annex herewith, a tabulated statement, marked (B), showing the average daily number of the four separate classes of children in the Cork Workhouse, during each of the last eight years, and also the number of deaths that took place during the same period in each. I would premise upon this point, that the average daily number is greatly under the actual number of different persons relieved in the workhouse, and therefore exposed to the casualty of death; more especially having regard to the fact, that a large number of those relieved are persons who merely come in for medical treatment, and either die there, or on being cured, leave, and give place to others entering for the same purpose.

From the verbal explanation given by the mayor when under examination, I collect, that the process by which he was conducted to the conclusion, that 19/20ths of the workhouse children die before attaining the age of 15, was this: thus, during the four years ended 25th March last, it appeared, that an average daily number of 889 children, of all ages, had been relieved in the workhouse, and that during the same period, the annual average number of deaths was 153, or 18 per cent., and assuming the 889 children to represent a fixed body of infants, and deducting from that body for 15 years, an annual per centage mortality of 18, it is undeniable, that, at the end of the time specified, the survivors would about represent the proportion indicated by the mayor.

The fallacy, however, lying at the root of all this is apparent; for, in the first place, the body of 889 is composed, not of infants merely, but of children of all ages, from less than 1 to 15 years, while the mortality which, when taken in the aggregate for all classes, amounts to 153, or 18 per cent., is only swelled to this amount by including the large mortality which is everywhere incidental to the period of infant life, from causes of a peculiar kind (such as their liability to epidemics) having no connexion of any sort with dietary.

Thus, during the four years referred to, during which the aggregate mortality in all classes of children was 18 per cent., the average daily number relieved of school children (5 to 15—the only classes whose condition or mortality can be regarded as illustrative of the effect of the workhouse dietary), was 615, and the average yearly mortality amongst them was 44, or 7 per cent., while for the two years ended 25th March last, the average daily number relieved of the same classes was 452, while the deaths for that period amongst them only amounted to 22, or 5 per cent. per annum.

In further illustration upon this important point, and as indicative of the extent to which the workhouse is made use of as a general hospital for the poor, I annex a statement, certified by the clerk of the union, giving the particulars of all the cases of children, from 5 to 15, who died in the workhouse during the three years ended the 25th March last, from which you will observe that of the total number, 86 in all, 28, or nearly one-third, were admitted, either directly to the workhouse hospital, or went there so soon after their admission, as to demonstrate that their illness was not generated by anything in the system of diet existing there.

I have dwelt at some length on this subject, but as the misconception prevailing with regard to it, by exciting an unfounded panic amongst the destitute classes, might lead to very serious consequences, by influencing them, when needing it, to decline the acceptance of workhouse relief, I have desired that everything connected with it should be fully and satisfactorily cleared up.

I have now come to the last topic in relation to which it becomes necessary for me to trespass on your attention, namely, the allegation contained in the mayor's report, that 50 inmates then maintained at the blind asylum by the union, had been deprived of sight by disease engendered by the diet of the workhouse.

Upon this point also it is clear that the Mayor, most unintentionally, I am sure, was led into a serious error, indeed, he has stated as much in his evidence.

A return, certified by the clerk, and setting forth all the particulars of the several cases, is forwarded herewith, from which you will observe that the majority of this number lost their sight outside the workhouse, and have been only sent to their present asylum at the expense of the rate-payers, as an act of merciful consideration for their helpless condition, on the part of the guardians; and of those who did contract the disease in the house, it will be seen, that in most of the cases this took place during the terrible pressure of the famine years, and when ophthalmia, in its severest form, and arising from causes quite remote from

all questions of dietary, raged with peculiar severity throughout a large proportion of the union workhouses in Ireland.

I have now brought this very extended report to a close, and I can only, in conclusion, express the very sincere hope I entertain, that all the angry feelings which the inquiry evoked, in its preliminary stages, may be henceforth totally forgotten, and that the guardians, having now at their command a body of valuable practical information, not previously open to them, will address themselves in a spirit of harmony and good feeling to the important duty of turning it to good account, and of rendering the Cork Union, what I am sure they possess, both the ability and, it is to be hoped, the desire to make it, a source of credit to themselves, and an example worthy of the imitation of the other Boards of Guardians in this country.

I have, &c.  
(signed) T. Brodie,  
Poor Law Inspector.

To the Poor Law Commissioners,  
Custom House, Dublin.

#### MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

##### CORK UNION.

JOHN ARNOTT, M.P., Mayor of Cork, being duly sworn, said:—I am not a member of the Cork Board of Guardians. I made an inspection of the workhouse on the 4th of April last. I was accompanied through the house by Drs. Popham and W. Townsend. I made a report of my inspection, and entered it in the visitors' book. I reported that the inmates are all comfortably housed and well clothed; that the wards of the hospital are perfectly clean, and the clothing, like everything else, quite clean. I also reported that I was shocked—*—nay, appalled*—from my observation of the state of the children; that the result of my inquiries led me to the deliberate conclusion, that it would be a mercy to close the gates of the union workhouse against them, and let them attain the mercy of death rather than be reared deformed, maimed, and diseased objects, through the system of feeding to which, I have reason to believe, their terrible state is attributable. For want of proper nutriment and change of diet, scrofula has so infected those young creatures, that there was scarcely one of them I examined that did not bear plain and frightful tokens that their blood had been wasted to that degree, that the current which should have borne vigour and health to their frames, was only a medium of disseminating debility and disease. I still adhere to that report. I have visited the house since I made that report; I found 289 children, either born in the house or brought into it, as I was told, in an ordinary state of health; out of the 289, there were 200 in hospital or infirm; some of these were very frightful objects; I could not ascertain that the entire of the 289 were suffering from scrofula, but I believe that five-sixths were so affected. I then examined what are called the healthy classes; the first five boys I examined were diseased; one had sore eyes; a second, lumps on his neck; a third, sores on his head; the fourth had a mark on his leg, and had recently been in hospital; the fifth had a mark on the side, evidently the mark of disease. I then dismissed all those that had marks on them to stand aside; at least three-fourths of them stood out of the ranks, all more or less diseased, all more or less marked; some very slightly; a good many had scald heads. At the time I made my report, I was under the impression that the majority of those suffering from ophthalmia and sore heads were the effects of scrofula. I next went to the girls' class; they appeared to me to be the healthiest class in the house; I have ascertained that since the date of my inspection 18 boys or girls were transferred to the hospital. I will not take upon myself to say that they were all suffering from scrofula; the girls looked healthy, but I did not make the same personal examination of them that I did of the boys. I consider that the sameness of diet is objectionable, and is one of the causes of the prevalence of scrofula. I also attribute it partly to the quality of the food; the brown bread is not easily digested. I attribute it also to the absence of vegetable diet; I do not object to the quantity; I consider it to be sufficient; this applies to all the children up to 15 years of age. I am aware that since March 1858 all the children between the ages of five and nine get 1½ lb. of white bread, and one quart of milk daily; besides the diet, there are other causes, want of playful exercise in the open air. Previous to my inspection, I heard that there was a great deal of scrofula in the house. I inquired of Dr. Townsend, one of the medical officers, if such was the case; he said that there was a great deal of disease and scrofula in the house, and that he would be glad to accompany me through it; this conversation took place three weeks before I made my inspection. He stated to me that the scrofula which prevailed in the house was caused by the diet then in use; he referred to its sameness, its insufficiency, and quality. I stated in my report, "that

"that I was told, and could well believe it, from what I had witnessed, that four out of every five die before they are adults, and that the survivors are, in a majority of cases, destroyed in consumption." I got that information from a guardian who accompanied me through the house; but if I had said 19-25ths I would have been nearer to the mark. I have taken a very careful note from your books, and find that there were, during the last four years, an average of 809 children in the house; the annual mortality has been 166, that is, 18 per cent. Of the 40 children referred to in my report, as sent from this house to the Blind Asylum, 32 had become blind here. I think the blindness is to be attributed to the diet; I may be wrong.

It is not to the Cork workhouse I object, it is to the entire system. Every one must admit that the workhouse stands on a very bad site.

When leaving the workhouse on the 6th April, the matron asked me to make an entry in the visitors' book. I took the book home with me; the master first objected; but having obtained the consent of a member of the Board, he permitted me to take it. Dr. Townsend never suggested a fine of the report.

From my observations of the state of the children in the charitable institutions of this city, I am prepared to say that scrofula does not prevail to any extent amongst them.

I have frequently heard it said that the workhouse site is bad. The sewerage is defective.

I remained about three hours in the workhouse on the day of my inspection, 6th April. I made a very close inspection. [Porter's book produced; extract therefrom: "Arrived 25 minutes past 12 o'clock; left half-past 2 o'clock."] The report is mine; I adopt, and am answerable for it. It was written by one of my young men at my dictation. The ideas are mine. When Dr. Townsend spoke to me about the diet, he said that he had made complaints to the Board of Guardians, and that he was rebuffed. I said that the sameness of diet and the want of vegetables was the cause of scrofula. I say so still. I examined portions of the food; the soup was vile stuff; I was told there was a small portion of vegetables in it.

I paid two visits to the house subsequent to the 6th of April; what I observed on these occasions fully sustains my report.

When I visited the girls' school, I found 48 out of 60 who had been affected with sore eyes.

I do not think that I saw any scrofula in the infant school.

John Arscott, Mayor.

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.

ALBERT HENRY CAILLAMAN, M.D., being duly sworn, deposes:—I am 52 years a practising Physician in Cork. I am not in any way connected with this workhouse. I made an inspection of the house on the 14th ultimo, at the request of the mayor; I saw the children at dinner; I examined the children; I tasted the soup and found it almost pure water. I inquired of what it was composed, and was told of rice, oatmeal, and vegetables. I stirred up the soup, and could only discover in it one or two grains of rice, and a few shreds of leek. I observed a great many of the porringers on the tables before the boys untouched. I inquired of three or four of the boys why they did not eat their bread; they replied, "they could not eat, they did not like it." I examined it, and found it very inferior; it smelt sour, and was heavy and glozy; the flour of which it was made was coarse and of inferior quality. I remarked to one of the officials that the boys were not eating their bread, and that I was not at all surprised at it. He answered, "it is bad; I suppose it is accidental." I inquired of three or four of the boys why they did not drink the soup, they answered they could not, for there were insects in it, "caterpillars" or beetles. I did not see them myself. The boys appeared to be in fair health, with the exception of having some marks of scrofula; they were stunted and blighted in their growth. I proceeded to the infant boys' school; the great mass of the boys are scrofulous to a high degree. My conviction is, that the diet in use tends to the development of scrofula, or produces it; low diet and confinement would produce the disease in animals. I examined the bread and soup on Friday last; both were much improved; the quantity of bread allowed is sufficient. I examined the children in the female school; they appeared to be healthy, with the exception of having strong indications of scrofula. It appeared to me that 25 or 40 of the children had the disease in a latent state. I examined the children in the infant school; they presented a more formidable appearance, but still a good many of them had the scrofulous diathesis. I examined the children in the sick wards, and could see nothing but scrofula fully developed, glandular swellings, ulcerations, strumous ophthalmia, disease of joints, caries of bones. I do not class the cutaneous diseases, porrigo, tinea capitis, &c., under the head of scrofula. I then went up to another department; the greater number were suffering from scrofula in a confirmed state; in fact, all the children in hospital, with the exception of 10 or 12, were suffering from the disease. On Friday last there were 43 girls in the hospital, all of whom, with the exception of five, were suffering from it, hideously developed in some cases. I next proceeded to the real hospital, where the patients were confined to bed; there I found a number of human beings covered with scrofula, eyes, lips, glands, &c., eaten away. My observations fully sustain the Mayor's report.

I feel it to be my duty to acquaint you, for the information of the Poor Law Commissioners, that if the dietary and exercise of the union workhouses be not altered or improved, it will deteriorate for ages to come a very large portion of the community. Those creatures will arrive at the ages of manhood and womanhood; they will marry, or otherwise procreate; and scrofula will beget scrofula to the end of the chapter.

So long as the hospital remains in its present position, surrounded as it is by high walls, and the air polluted from so many people being congregated together, the sanitary condition of the workhouse inmates must continue unsatisfactory.

Fully one-fourth of the nutritious quality of the milk is lost by the removal of the cream. Low diet would develop scrofula, where there was a predisposition to the disease; and produce it, where there was no such predisposition, when combined with over-crowding and want of exercise.

A superior diet would retard scrofula, even without exercise. The dietary is not sufficiently varied; I would vary it by giving animal food and vegetables. I am not aware that in the English workhouses, where they give animal food, scrofula prevails to any extent; I have no statistics to prove it. I have met with scrofula in private practice, not more than five or six per cent.

In my opinion, the children of those who suffered during the famine years are as fully grown as any others.

I do not believe that scrofula prevails to any great extent amongst the children of the poor in this city. Scrofula is an hereditary disease.

(signed) *Albert H. Collinson, M.D.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

(signed) *T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

CALLED HENRY CLIFFORD, being duly sworn, saith:—I am now, and have been, Protestant chaplain in Cook Union Workhouse for the last 18 or 19 years. I have, in the discharge of my duties, frequently visited the house, and turned my attention to the sanitary state of its inmates. I often wished for some alteration in the dietary, being of opinion that its present sameness was not conducive to health; I was always of opinion that an admixture of animal food would be an improvement, and tend to the health of the inmates; I have frequently examined the bread, and found it more frequently bad than good. My impression is, that very few articles for consumption ever came into this house equal to the sample contracted for. I do not consider that the bread used in this house is made from prime second flour, the quality contracted for; the bread was sometimes heavy, as if there had been no harm used; the bread now placed before me is far superior in quality to that generally used in the house; I would not object to the bread, if it were equal to this. I have examined the soup; I thought it a misnomer to call it soup; the soup now before me is not a fair sample of the average quality, it is better in substance. I have examined the school children; the state of health of many of them is bad; scrofula prevails amongst the children and some of the adults. I think the unhealthy state of the workhouse inmates proceeds from a combination of circumstances, namely, the unwholesomeness of the atmosphere, arising from the unhealthy site of the building; the bad quality of the water heretofore used; the insufficient hospital classification, owing to want of sufficient hospital accommodation; the proximity of manure to the walls of the house. I have seen children labouring under different diseases sleeping in the same bed; I have seen a dysenteric patient in the same bed with a patient suffering from sore eyes. The medicine appeared to me to be of inferior quality; I refer to sassailla and opium; they were wanting in colour and strength; this applies to the sassailla prepared in the house; I judged of its strength by taste and colour. If I found the sassailla of a pale colour, I would come to the conclusion that it had been badly prepared. I am of opinion that the dietary in use in the Cook Workhouse, from its sameness and sometimes inferior quality, tends to the development of scrofula; the quantity I consider to be sufficient. I examined the articles among the inmates, and not in store. I am of opinion that the children deteriorate after their admission to the house. I have read the Mayor's report, and consider it to be substantially, though not statistically, correct. I heard many complaints of the soup, milk, and bread, previous to the date of the Mayor's report; none subsequent to it. Up to the last six months the milk was bad; when boiled, it presented a thin curdy appearance. I complained to the baker of the quality of the bread; I never complained to the Board of the quality of the provisions, or of the medicine. I have heard that milk, when bad, was sent away, and that, after being sent outside the gate, was brought back again. I am of opinion that taking the children into the country would tend to the maintenance of their health. I did not express an opinion to the Guardians that a little animal food would be necessary; I never called their attention to the inferiority of the food. I sometimes spend two or three hours in the workhouse; I do not visit it daily; I sometimes visit the house twice, three, and often four times in the week.

*Caldo H. Clifford, Protestant Chaplain.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

PATRICK O'REGAN, being duly sworn, saith:—I am acting for the Very Rev. Mr. Murphy, Roman-catholic Chaplain, Cork Union Workhouse; I have been so acting for the last 19 months. I visit the house almost daily; I have occasionally examined the bread and soup; it struck me that the hospital bread was occasionally badly baked; I consider that the quantity of bread allowed to children from two to nine a fair allowance, and that a pint of milk at each meal is sufficient; the children in the house are not so healthy as those of the same class outside; I have observed a good deal of scrofula amongst the workhouse children; I am inclined to think that the locality is unhealthy, inasmuch as it is a low, damp site; I consider that the ill health of the children from scrofula arises from the dietary in use, that is, from its sameness and want of nutritive elements; my principal objection to it is the absence of animal food; I do not consider the brown bread to be as nutritious as white bread; I am of opinion that four ounces of bread for the supper meal is not sufficient for children from nine to 15; I have always found the guardians most attentive in providing for our wants.

*Patrick O'Regan, R.C.C.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

WILLIAM FITZGERALD, Lord Bishop of Cork, saith:—I made an inspection of the Cork workhouse within the past fortnight for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent scrofula prevailed amongst the children, and I am sorry to say that the impression made upon me by the inspection was, that scrofula prevailed to a most alarming extent. It seemed to me an inference I could not avoid drawing, that the children either came into the house with the disease, or that it was engendered there; and that if engendered, there must be some peculiar cause in the house operating to produce it; and that if they brought it with them into the house, the regimen and rules applicable to healthy children were not the rules and regimen applicable to them. I was sorry to hear, in answer to my inquiries, that potatoes did not form an article of diet of the young persons, as it is the only vegetable that can be easily procured in any large quantity all the year round. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the dietary of the house to give any opinion as to its sufficiency; but I should say that a good deal depends on the quality of the milk. The children under five years appeared to me to be in better health than those above that age. I observed that the hospital was overcrowded; two children were put into the same bed. I may observe that the poor people of this country have been accustomed to a potato diet; that as their children inherit constitutions of the same kind, it would, in my opinion, be very desirable that potatoes should form an element of their diet in the workhouse. I may further observe, that during the famine years the poor people who went into the workhouses having been accustomed to a potato diet outside, were attacked with a form of scrovy, which had to be treated in the same manner as sea-scurvy. I would wish to suggest, for the consideration of the Poor Law Commissioners and the guardians, whether the clogs, which are put on the children at an early age, is not objectionable. I should say that the workhouse site is objectionable. I cannot, from my own observation, speak as to the extent to which scrofula prevails amongst the poorer classes in this city; but I have been informed, in reply to inquiries made by me, that it does not prevail to any great extent.

Monotony of diet tends to engender scrofula. I heard Dr. Popham say that children were sent from the Blind Asylum to the workhouse, there to die, or words to that effect; he said it with a view to account for the high mortality in the workhouse as compared with that of the asylum. Dr. Popham subsequently modified his statement, after he had heard of the denial of the Mayor and the Rev. Mr. Webster.

I adhere to the expression in my letter, that the great prevalence of scrofula in the house struck me with a painful horror. I am quite prepared to put in my letter in evidence.

*William, Cork.*

Acknowledged before me, this 11th day of May 1859,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

EDWARD PAUL TOWNSEND, being duly sworn, saith:—I am a member of the religious community of Presentation Brothers; we have three large schools connected with our community; the admissions to these schools are from the poorest classes in the city. In two of those schools there are at present between 1,100 and 1,200, and in the third school between 300 and 400 children; the boys look healthy; I have not made any examination of those children with a view to ascertain if scrofula prevail amongst them. I never, with a few exceptions, observed any traces of scrofula; about five months since a boy, named Minnow, 11 years of age, left our school, and came into this workhouse; he remained in the workhouse until within the last week, and then returned to our school; on his return his eyes were sore, and he appeared low-spirited. I have seen other boys who had been inmates of the workhouse, and they appeared to me to be delicate; they had been previously in

our schools; they improved in health in a short time after leaving the workhouse; I attribute the improvement to change of air and diet. Out of 4,208 children who, during the past two years, frequented our schools, there were only five deaths. Those 4,208 children are of the poorest classes, and the worst fed. When I spoke of five deaths I meant that that was the number registered by us. We inquire after the boys for three months after they leave the school; if boys died within three months and a week, they would not be registered. Mahony told me that the diet he received at the workhouse was Indian-meal stirred about and a pint of milk in the morning, and bean bread and porridge in the evening for dinner, half-pound of the same bread for supper. I was not aware that children between the ages of two and nine get 1½ lb. of bread and one quart of milk daily; I cannot say if this diet be sufficient.

*Edward Paul Townsend.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me, this 12th day of May 1856,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

**JEREMIAH DESMOND**, being duly sworn, saith:—I am now, and have been for the last five years, acting as assistant teacher in the Cork Union Workhouse. The infirm school boys, to the number of 27, are under my charge; the ages of those boys vary from nine to 18; as far as I can judge, eight of those boys are suffering from ophthalmia; seven have scrofula or scrofulous marks; four have sore heads, and eight general debility. A majority of those boys have been for the last five years either in the infirm ward or hospital; they get 1½ lb. of white bread and one quart of skimmed milk daily; the doctor visits them; they are under medical treatment; they remain at school from one to four; they are employed before school-hour, either in cleaning the house, or working on the farm; I have frequently heard them complain that they do not get enough to eat; I never heard them complain of the quality of the bread; I rarely heard them complain of the quality of the milk; during six months of the year they get vegetable soup for dinner in lieu of milk; they frequently complained of the quality of the soup, and left it in the porringers; I have tasted it; from inquiry made by me I am satisfied that 80 per cent. of the boys admitted into the house came in in a healthy state.

Messrs. Butcher and Mahoney, members of the Board, frequently visit the department of the house in my charge; I have detected one of my boys selling his bread; I mentioned to the head schoolmaster that the boys did not consume one half of their soup; I reported to the master of the workhouse the traffic in bread; the boys prefer the vegetables to the fluid part of the soup; I heard the boys complain two years ago, and also within the last year, that they were not getting enough to eat; some of the boys have improved in health since they came into the house.

*Jeremiah Desmond.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

**FRANCIS H. CORNICK**, being duly sworn, saith:—I am now, and have been for the last three years and eight months, head teacher in the Cork Union Workhouse. There are 88 boys between the ages of nine and 15 in my school; they are, in general, weak and debilitated. Dr. Townsend, one of the medical officers of the house, gave me directions to have the boys arranged for him at half-past nine o'clock this morning; I so arranged them; he stripped the boys and examined them in my presence; I heard in the result of his examination. Dr. Townsend told me that the several boys named in this return, 14, are suffering from scrofula in some form; I heard in another return, containing the names of 13 boys whom the doctor told me were labouring under chronic ophthalmia; those boys are on diet 4. I attend in the dining hall during meal hours; the bread in general use, as brown bread, is good; the sample now produced is not a fair sample, being of better description than that in general use; the vegetable soup, as a vegetable soup, is fair; the boys have not directly complained of the bread; as a general rule they do not eat their soup; the boys suffering from chronic ophthalmia sleep in the same dormitories with the other children; the health of the boys has improved since they were put to work on the farm; as a general rule I would say that the boys do not improve in the house. The medical officer occasionally visits the school; I never reported to the master, to the visiting committee, or to the guardians, that the boys did not consume their soup; I consider the soup now produced as being a fair sample, with this exception, that the soup generally contained a larger quantity of vegetables and a small quantity of meat.

*Francis H. Cornick.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

DAVID

DAVID CREMEN, M.D., being duly sworn, saith:—I have been for the last two years connected with No. 2 Dispensary District; it is a poor district, and includes a rural population. I have observed that there is a great immensity from scrofula in my district. I went over my register for the year 1857, and find registered 5,707 patients; 153 of these had scrofula fully developed, not including consumption; of this disease there were 50 cases; very few persons presented themselves at the dispensary with scrofula in a latent state; the number of scrofula cases during the year 1858 was about the same.

*David Cremen.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

S. HENRY HOBART, being duly sworn, saith:—I have been for the last four years medical officer, North-west Dispensary District; nearly all the slaughter-houses in the city are built in my district; the poor connected with those houses have opportunities of getting scraps of meat. I take it that 5 per cent. of the poor who apply to me for dispensary relief, have a scrofulous taint; this 5 per cent. includes all cases dependent on scrofulous taint; but probably not more than 2½ per cent. had scrofula fully developed at the time of the application for relief.

*S. Henry Hobart.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

JOHN DENIS O'FLYNN, being duly sworn, saith:—I have been for the last seven years connected, as medical officer, with the North Dispensary District; it is a poor district. I registered over 1,800 cases from January 1858 to December 1858; of these, 46 had scrofula, including 16 cases of consumption.

*John D. O'Flynn.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

W. HUMPHRIES, M.D., being duly sworn, saith:—I am medical officer, Central Dispensary District; mine is a very poor district; scrofula prevails to some extent amongst the children of the poorer class. During the last year between 3,500 and 4,000 patients attended at my dispensary; 2½ to 3½ per cent. of the number were suffering from scrofula, fully developed; this includes glandular swellings, abscesses, diseased joints, and diseases of scalp; with the exception of pthisis, all other cases of scrofula are included in thiscentage.

It would be impossible to give any opinion as to the number of persons who have the disease in the latent state. I have met with but very few cases of strumous ophthalmia; of those, some stated that they had been in the workhouse. I never directed my attention to scrofula, with a view to ascertain to what extent it prevailed in my district. My district includes the whole flat of the city, and the most confined and dirty part of the city.

*Walter Humphries, M.D.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

CHARLES ARMSTRONG, being duly sworn, saith:—I am physician of St. Luke's Dispensary District; I have been connected with it for 10 years; it is not a particularly poor locality; I have looked over my register from 1st May to 30th April; 5,108 patients were registered during that period; 43 were entered under the head of scrofula; 76 under the head of consumption; there may be, and no doubt are, others in the district afflicted with the disease who never applied for relief. I visit the poor at their houses. If I heard that 20 per cent. of the people were suffering from scrofula I would not believe it; I would believe that five per cent. suffer from the disease; many have it in a latent state; I know there are some in this room who have a scrofulous habit, and know nothing about the disease. There is a locality in my district in which five or six cases of consumption are always to be found.

*Charles Armstrong.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

RICHARD T. FOWLER, being duly sworn, saith :—I have been for the last eight years connected with No. 7 Dispensary District. It is a poor district; a great part of it contains a rural population; the workhouse is situate in the district; I have not  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of developed scrofula in my district; this per centage includes consumption. During the last six months a large number of children were affected with glandular swellings, not scrofulous, which yielded to treatment. The poor people live upon Indian-meal, fish, tea, coffee, and potatoes in abundance.

*Richard T. Fowler, M.D.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

GEORGE WYCKERLY, being duly sworn, saith :—I am physician to the South Dispensary District; it is the poorest of the city. In the lanes there is a considerable amount of scrofula; I speak of the miserable occupants of the huts; if I include the whole district, I would say that the per centage would be two or three per cent. The diet is very bad where the scrofula prevails. The food is insufficient in quantity and bad in quality; it consists principally of Indian-meal, tea, and bread; the district suffered more from want of good water than any in the city; the clothing and bedding are very bad; five per cent. is the least average of those affected in the poorer classes; I am of opinion that poor food has a tendency to generate scrofula. I have just heard Mr. Jennings read over the dietary in use in this workhouse for children from nine to fifteen, and I have no hesitation in saying, it must have a most injurious effect upon their health; the milk is not sufficient, and the sameness of the diet is not calculated to make them healthy; the effect of a change from a better to a worse class of diet in children of nine years would be bad.

*George Wyckery.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

EDWARD R. TOWNSEND, being duly sworn, saith :—I have been 24 years practising as a medical man in Cork. I have made an inspection of the workhouse within the past fortnight; I went through it very minutely. I visited it every day for eight days; the first day I was accompanied by Doctors Popham and W. Townsend, and on the other days by Doctors Harvey, Popham, and Townsend. I received a notification from the Board to inspect the children of the house, with regard to their sanitary condition. I would wish to remark, that finding this a matter of much greater importance than was at first thought, Dr. Harvey and I put our views in the form of a Report, which we will read and offer in evidence.

[Dr. Townsend read the Report, a copy of which is annexed hereto.]

#### CORK UNION.

#### REPORT of Drs. Townsend and Harvey.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

In compliance with your request, Dr. Harvey and I have carefully examined into the state of the Cork Union Workhouse, and likewise of the numerous children residing within your establishment; also into the sanitary condition of the entire institution. We must express our perfect satisfaction at the good order, cleanliness, and regularity which pervade the whole establishment. Nothing could be better regulated, and the public are greatly indebted to the Board of Guardians for making those arrangements which prevented the workhouse from being a source of destructive pestilence to this city and its neighbourhood.

The Cork workhouse consists of a lying-in hospital, a foundling hospital, an asylum for the aged and destitute, extensive schools, and an overgrown chronic hospital. There are 1,300 human beings residing within the walls of this establishment, of whom 700 are recipients of medical relief; all crowded together in buildings sunk below the level of the road, and in an unhealthy locality; and considering its malarious position, we were not surprised at the results produced on the health of the inmates after a certain period of life.

The children were wonderfully free from cutaneous disease, and their management and treatment reflect the greatest credit on the medical attendants. The disease which was most frequent, and productive of the greatest evils, was scrofula in all its varied forms, attacking the different parts of the human frame, causing in many instances deformity of appearance, and in others rendering the extremities of the body useless. We expected to find this form of disease very extensive, as in the first place scrofula will be found, more or less, in all workhouses, and in our union particularly so, because it receives the disease and wretched offspring of the profligate and vicious inhabitants not only of this entire city, but of the seaports of Queensstown, Monkstown, Ringaskiddy and Passage; besides those of the inland

inland villages of Glenties, Riverstown, and Douglas; and hereditary taint, there can be no doubt, is a prolific cause of this disease. Scrofula will exist likewise in the offspring of healthy parents, under certain circumstances, which tend to develop the peculiar poison which produces this disease in the animal economy, such as exposure to cold, damp and cold air, insubstantial food, deficient clothing, inhaling a vitiated atmosphere, and herding together in crowded rooms; but it is a disease which, without any explainable cause, beyond that of climate, affects all ranks, from those who use meat with every worldly comfort, to the poor and ill-fed peasant, depending on a scanty and precarious subsistence; and we believe there is scarcely a family which has not had some member affected by this malady, in one form or other. No care, no comfort, no nutritious diet, will altogether prevent it; but it is elicited by the causes already named, and is consequently more common in some districts of the country than in others. It is a disease altogether unknown to the inhabitants residing in countries of the two extremes of temperature; thus, it is unknown in Sierra Leone, and the central portion of Africa, but when negroes are subjected to the exciting causes, they fall rapidly victims to the disease, the utmost care and most nutritious food failing to avert the malady. Mr. Pearson, who had charge of the boys brought over by the Sierra Leone Company for education, states, that the boys brought from tropical climates, at the age of eight or twelve, almost invariably became scrofulous. We will now proceed to show how this disease is produced, and why it should exist in so severe a form in your institution. First, we have stated that malaria, cold and damp air, and an unwholesome locality, are among the exciting causes.

The Cork Union Workhouse has unhappily been placed, contrary to the urgent advice of one of the writers of this report, in its present objectionable situation. Erected on a low, swampy piece of ground, surrounded by bog, extensive marshy districts, and in the neighbourhood of vegetable gardens where extensive vegetable decomposition is continually going on, without drainage or sewerage of any kind, the atmosphere is always loaded with a damp and malarious vapour, the effects of which are clearly manifested by the appearance of the individuals who have been long exposed to them. On the 7th of August 1832, before the site for the building was finally decided on, I, by direction of Mr. Vowler, the Poor Law Commissioner, examined the ground, and reported most strongly against its selection for the purpose. I shall quote two passages from that Report:—

"In a medical point of view, nothing can be more objectionable. The ground is so situated as to receive with full force the unwholesome miasmata arising from one of the most extensive marshy districts in this county;" and I concluded the Report by saying, "I am of opinion that were a house of industry to be erected on that piece of ground, the inhabitants of its wards would never be free from ague or fever in some of its severe forms."

Now, the same cause which produces ague and fever frequently produces scrofula; hence the frequency of the disease in aguish countries—Holland, &c.

The position of the present workhouse is such that no system of drainage can be carried out. The main drains opening in the field on the west side of the establishment, and the privies being some of them cleared out daily, by means of covered waggons, passing through the yards where the inmates are exhaling poison and pernicious miasmata; and other privies, which are the main privies of the house, discharging their contents into reservoirs which are cleared out once or twice in the year. Miss Nightingale makes the following sound observations in her pamphlet:—

"Sewage may become the source of the most dangerous description if improperly made and placed. At Scutari, if the wind changed so as to blow up the open mouths of the sewers, such change was frequently marked by outbreaks of fever among the patients, and by relapses among the convalescents. Where sewers passed close to or under occupied rooms, the walls or covers being very defective, exhalation will inevitably escape into those rooms; such could be distinctly perceived in Scutari Hospital, and cases of cholera are distinctly traced to such a cause. Not very long ago, five fatal cases of fever occurred in rapid succession among the nurses in one of our civil hospitals, which were traced to a defective drain." It is, therefore, fearful to contemplate what may be the destructive havoc of human life caused by the want of sufficient drainage in such an enormous establishment as this.

We now come to the consideration of one of the most fertile causes in the production of this disease, namely, overcrowding. That extraordinary changes take place in the atmosphere when respired by a number of human beings congregated in confined situations without ventilation, must be admitted as undeniable facts. On the 20th June 1760, 145 gentlemen and others were thrust into a dungeon well known as the Black Hole of Calcutta, which was only 18 feet square; 123 died before morning. We are all familiar with the fatal catastrophe which resulted from a similar cause in the *Londonderry steamer* not many years since. In a mitigated form fever is produced, and when the poison becomes more diluted, scrofula results. Thence it is that the inhabitants of the crowded, ill-ventilated lanes of a city, although better fed and better clad than the inhabitants of rural districts, suffer much more from the disease. The following quotation from a French writer of eminence clearly elucidates this point:—"The external agents generally regarded as the exciting causes of scrofula, are peculiarities in diet, situation, and atmosphere. Bad diet has usually been stated to exert peculiar influence. Though there can be no doubt that the disease greatly prevails amongst the ill-fed poor, yet on examining the question more fully, it would seem that the effects of diet have been greatly exaggerated, as the disease exists to a great extent amongst the well-fed also; in fact, were we to take our examples only from those in a parallel walk of life, the contrary conclusion might be stated as the correct one; for the poor of towns, who are much better fed than the poor in the country, are the most prone to

It. Bandeloue, who states a vitiated atmosphere to be the sole exciting cause, and has analysed all the other theories in order to dispute them, brings forward many strong facts in favour of this position. He contrasts the scrofulous liability of the children of artisans in Paris with those in Picardy; the former, who are well fed, are frequently victims of the disease, while the latter enjoy a comparative immunity; and he quotes the *Memoir of Madras*, or the *Medical Topography of Bone St. Andrew*, where it appears that food is good, abundant and cheap, where situation and all other circumstances concur to produce a healthy district, yet the disease is found to be very common amongst the inhabitants; and Borden states the more conclusive fact, of the sons of mountaineers who are sent into towns to qualify themselves as churchmen, and are better fed than their brothers in the mountains, and yet frequently become scrofulous, which is rarely the case with the others. At Palermo it is very notorious that the food is of the most nutritious and worst kind, yet among its inhabitants the disease is almost unknown.

But another source exists which must corrupt the atmosphere and tend to eliminate disease, viz., the crowding of several hundred diseased human beings in buildings called hospitals, but built without any one of the requirements necessary for a good hospital. For example, there are no water-closets in any of the hospitals, male or female, only night chairs; the sick are generally scattered in wards in different parts of the house, and the male hospital is crowded to a great extent. The limit allowed to each bed on an average, being only four feet eleven in width, by eight feet some few inches in length. The wards are very lofty, but the windows do not reach to the top. The ventilation is defective, and bad air accumulates. Here again, I will quote from Miss Nightingale:—"It is a well-established fact that, other things being equal, the amount of sickness and mortality on different areas bears a ratio to the degree of density of the population. Why should urban agglomeration of sick be any exception to this law? Is it not rather to be expected that the concentrations of sick people bring more susceptible than those of healthy people, they should suffer more from this cause? But if anything were wanting in confirmation of this fact, it would be the enormous mortality in the hospitals which contained perhaps the largest number of sick ever at one time under the same roof, viz., those of Seaton. The largest of these two famous hospitals had at one time 2,500 sick and wounded under its roof, and it has happened that of Seaton patients, two out of every five have died. In the hospital tents of the Crimea, although the sick were almost without shelter, without blankets, without proper food or medicines, the mortality was not above one-half what it was at Seaton. Nor was it even so high as this in the small Balaklava General Hospital, while in the huts of the Crimean Hospital on the heights above Balaklava, at a subsequent period, the mortality among the wounded did not reach three per cent. It is not to this, however, that we appeal as the only proof of the danger of surface overcrowding. It is to the fact of 80 cases of hospital gangrene having been recorded during one month at Seaton, and many, many more passed unrecorded; to the fact that out of 44 secondary amputations of the lower extremities consecutively performed, 24 died; and to the cases of fever which broke out in the hospital, not by tens, but by hundreds. All experience tells the same tale, both among sick and well. Men will have a high rate of mortality in large barracks, a low one in separate huts, even with a much less amount of cubic space."

The effects of scrofula are here very severe, and although every care and attention was paid—good diet, skilful treatment,—the disease was present in a more intense form than we almost ever saw it before. Surely, crowding a number of beings affected with scrofulous ulcerations could not contribute to the health of the other patients; and here we would observe that, in our opinion, this vast receptacle of disease ought not to exist on part of the workhouse; and that if no other reason could be assigned, this alone would call for a general hospital. Patients not taken ill in the house enter for the sake of hospital accommodation, there being at present no other asylum for their reception. The guardians have done everything in their power, as far as order, cleanliness, good diet, and medical attendance will avail; but nothing will overcome the difficulties alluded to, as I believe they have no power to limit the admissions. We have examined, individually, the whole of the children in the workhouse under 15 years of age, amounting to 339; of these we found 310, or 87½ per cent., healthy; 103, or 19½ per cent., more or less affected with scrofula; 40, or 7½ per cent., labouring under affections of the eyes or lids, and 24 under other diseases. Of those marked as scrofulous, a large number might fairly have been considered healthy, but we thought it best to place all who had their glands presenting enlargement to the touch under this division. The children in the female and the infant school gave us the impression of being well fed, vigorous and happy. The boys, on the whole, are by no means so striking a group, although the proportion of healthy (76-80) was large; the infants appeared to be in excellent condition. Of those in the male lower wards, composed of boys sufficiently well to attend schools but labouring under chronic affections, a considerable number were separated on account of contagious skin diseases, and the like. These amounted to 29 of all sorts. A similar ward for females contained 27 individuals. In this group we were told that they were kept entirely with a view to temporarily modifying their diet. In the hospitals, as was to be expected, we found a large amount of very aggravated disease, advanced scrofula being a large proportion to the general mass of suffering. The number of scrofulous cases amounted to 23 in 35 in the male hospital, and 21 in 45 in the female, a number not larger than might be expected, considering the extent of the ulcer, and considering also that many chronic cases apply for admission to the workhouse for the purpose of being transferred to the hospital, as such cases are not kept beyond a limited period in the infirmaries. Here, indeed, were many miserable objects, and hopelessly disabled, but

it struck us forcibly that in the male wards, especially, the crowding, close air, and want of proper ventilation could not fail greatly to diminish the chances of recovery of the whole. We have seen above, that 104 of the 539 children examined presented enlarged glands, recognizable by the touch, marks, diseased joints, &c., or in a proportion of about 19½ per cent. of the whole. Is this a large per centage as compared with the prevalence of the disease elsewhere? This will be best seen by comparing the results of actual examinations similarly made. Mr. Phillips, from examinations made in 115 different country districts in Great Britain and Ireland, says, that of 183,721 children examined, 24½ per cent. presented the above marks. In union houses the average was rather above, for charity schools, rather below that average. In a return of the poor of England and Wales generally, the children from five to six show scrofula in the proportion of about 28 per cent.; in hospitals and workhouses, about 32 per cent. Again, of 784 children in endowed and other schools, where they were well cared for, the marks of scrofula were found in 127, or 16 per cent. In 800 National school children brought up at home, they showed in 26½ per cent. In London Deaf and Dumb Institution, 30 per cent. On the Continent the returns show a considerably higher average. With regard to the sufficiency of the present diet for the support of the children (and we suppose something near the minimum must be kept to in workhouses), this may, in some degree, be estimated by a reference to the quantity of waste daily going on in the system, and the quantity of elementary principles necessary to supply that waste, without allowance in the case of children for the supply necessary for the growth of the body besides. It would appear from the experiments of Dr. Smith, Banaul, and others, that there is a daily waste of about 8 oz. of carbon and 200 grains nitrogen, which must be made up by food, containing both these principles at least, or the body will not be sufficiently nourished. Now, bread contains about 54 per cent. of carbon, and 5½ grains of nitrogen to the ounce, and the calculations of Dr. Smith, in his scheme of prison dietary, has shown from the above calculation, and from extensive verification in practice, that 23 oz. of fresh bread, with 2 oz. of cheese, would supply the required amount of carbon and nitrogen daily lost; and would, with the addition of water, support the system of an adult at rest, or with little exertion, for a lengthened period. It is shown also that 7½ parts of Indian corn are equal in carbon to 10 parts of bread. Hence, estimating the value of the dietary allotted to children from nine to 15 years, we may take for 16 oz. of bread, and 6 oz. of Indian meal as equivalent to 24 oz. of bread.

Then, 24 oz. of bread contains 8 oz. nearly of carbon and 138 grains of nitrogen; one pint of milk ½ oz. carbon and 59 grains nitrogen—making 8½ oz. carbon and 197 grains of nitrogen supplied by these, without the porridge; so that if we take 2 oz. of cheese as equivalent in nitrogen quantities to a quart of milk, the workhouse dietary for children from nine to 15 years is very nearly the same in value with the home dietary for an adult at rest, and may, therefore, be considered as adequate to their nutrition, with a full allowance for growth besides. That it is sufficient for the girls, our observation of their healthy and energetic condition above the male would seem to justify us in concluding, and it also appears to confirm the correctness of the principles thus applied to test the sufficiency of the dietary; that the boys do not thrive so well on it may arise from their greater activity and exertion. If such be the case, an addition of one-fifth to its nutritive value would be requisite, according to the authorities quoted above, to bring it to the level required for the boys. Milk, containing, as it does, the four essential principles of nutriment, namely, water, sugar, albumen, and oil, is very properly, with bread, made the staple article of diet. Still, if some variation could be made in the diet, increasing, or even without lowering, its nutritious value by the introduction, for instance, of animal matters yielding an extra supply of oil, especially during the winter months, when their heat-producing qualities would increase their usefulness, we believe it would tell advantageously on the health of the inmates. But any manner of improvement in food alone, under their present disadvantages of confinement and locality, we are fully convinced would do little towards reducing the amount of scrofula. Bread made with the whole meal as it issues from the mill, is now shown not only to possess advantages over white bread, by the branny parts furnishing the nitrogen, in which we have seen that the white is deficient, but also to be very beneficial by its aperient qualities in preserving a healthy state of digestion, where little exercise is available. On these grounds it may be questioned whether the children who are specially ordered white bread, are benefited by the preference. On the whole, we may state that we consider the management of the workhouse, in the department which we have examined, excellent in many respects, and calculated to come extent to neutralise the disadvantages of the locality of the building, the temperature, &c.; but we think that besides an improved diet, which would be desirable, regular exercise outside, and away from the immediate neighbourhood of the workhouse, would be an important addition to the regulations for the health of the children; that the general health of the children, all things considered, is good, and that the proportion of scrofula is rather small as compared not only with similar institutions, but even with the poor of England and Wales generally; that, considering that the hospital is extensively visited of by others than the inmates of the workhouse, the scrofulous cases are neither greater in number, nor severer in character than, under these circumstances, ought to be expected.

Having considered all the causes which generally lead to the development of scrofula, we come to the following conclusions, and for the reasons previously assigned:—First, dietary. Having seen that the children in the neighbouring unions, who have the same diet, nearly, as those in the Cork Union, are not quite so subject to the disease, it is plain that the diet

does not act as an exciting cause, and, as we have shown, that in point of numbers, the average of cases is in favour of the union, the number so affected being in proportion rather less than the average number in similar institutions. We must, therefore, look to some other causes, which tend to keep up the disease when once it manifests itself. The children, up to a certain period of life, are remarkably healthy in appearance, the countenance florid, muscular system well developed; it is plain that their diet is wholesome; fine children we have never seen than in the class from two to nine. The boys in the class nine to 15 had not the same healthy appearance as the girls, but after that age, we are led to think that both classes deteriorate. We do not believe this would be entirely prevented by an increased allowance of food, as powerful causes exist which interfere with their further development, such as exposure to malaria, monotonous occupation, no mental excitement, and the like. We would advise the total removal of all boys and girls, over 15, to open airy situations in the country, where they could be employed in out-of-door pursuits, the girls trained to occupation which would make them useful members of society. But if detained here after the age specified, no dirt, no care, will prevent their becoming a wretched race, morally and physically, far inferior to the peasantry of the country.

We think it possible some benefit might arise from varying the diet of the children, class nine to 15, by giving potatoes, instead of Indian meal, two or three times a week for breakfast. This is merely a suggestion, there being no facts to maintain the necessity of it; and we likewise think it would be desirable to give the boys some animal food two or three times in the week.

(signed) W. Townsend.  
J. R. Harvey.

EDWARD R. TOWNSEND re-examined:—The first feeling I would have on examining your dietary is, that there was too little variety in it. I was surprised to find so many children from nine to two years of age well grown and well developed. I made a formal inquiry through a friend of mine from the physicians of the Brandon and Middleton workhouses, and find that the children of those houses are healthier than those of this house, though the dietary is much the same; it was half per cent in favour of Brandon. I do not come here as the partner of the mayor or of the guardians; I know nothing about the charges; I give you sanitary evidence based on personal examination of the house. I have examined into those institutions where farinaceous food was used; a dietary I do not myself approve. I inquired into the dietary of the Foundling Hospital; the children of that institution got a very superior diet, which included meat, soup, vegetables, &c.; that was the diet of the old Foundling Hospital: the children of that institution ought to be very healthy, if diet alone was the cause, whereas they were directly the reverse; the locality was bad, and they were consequently deprived of air and exercise. I called on the late medical attendant of that house; he writes to me that scrofula was the leading complaint of the hospital, and that it was most extensive. I made another inquiry as to a children's school; the dietary was very good, meat every second day, and yet scrofula was very largely developed there. It is, therefore, impossible to form an opinion exactly as to what was, or what was not, a good diet; but to give my own view of the matter, I have no hesitation in saying, that compared with other workhouses, your diet is by no means the lowest; on the contrary, it appears to be the reverse; but my opinion is that the dietary of all the workhouses are defective. I think that animal food should be used more or less for all growing children, and I would not give unskimmed milk to all children; I would give them pure new milk. I consider the most nutritious part of the milk is the oily globule which is found in the cream. I have read the Mayor's Report very superficially, and I am sure that when the statement, "that the scrofula which prevails in this house is solely attributable to the poisonous effects of the dietary in use," he had not investigated the matter so closely as I have done. I found on comparison, which was the only way of ascertaining, that the inmates of several institutions using the same diet, were not as much afflicted with the disease as those of our union, and, consequently, the inference I drew was, that the use of some preventive diet would diminish the disease in this house, but that no system will altogether prevent it. The suggestions I would make are, to children from two to nine, I would give pure milk, not skimmed; to those from nine to 15, I would give animal food, and would recommend the total removal of all children at the age of 15 from this institution; I would send them to the country into situations: if there be no demand for their labour, I would get a farm at some distance from the house. I examined the bread several times, its quality appeared to me to be good; it is formed of one part of brown flour, and one part of seconds. I examined the soup, it is a very good vegetable soup, but is a poor kind of diet; it is decidedly nutritive, for it contains nutritive articles, viz., oatmeal, rice, onions, leeks, &c.

I did not remark that the children were stunted in growth; I never saw more beautiful children in my life than there were in the infant school; the girls, from nine to 15, are by no means badly developed; the boys were not as fine and healthy as the girls, but they were remarkably clean and well cared for.

I do not consider the dietary of this house to be poisonous, not even deleterious; but, in my opinion, it is not a good diet; a more nutritious one might be selected; 1½ lb. of bread is not a bad allowance for a child; I would like to give them potatoes.

Dr.

Dr. Philips, in his work on scrofula, states that in Mr. Ackroyd's mill, near Leeds, out of 162 children, 46 were scrofulous; yet they were well fed; got tea, coffee, vegetables, &c. In the Limerick workhouse, 85 per cent. of the children were scrofulous. I received a letter from Dr. Wood, of Bandon; the following is an extract:—

"At the same time you must have observed, as I have, that the disease of scrofula does not belong exclusively to the poor, ill-fed, degraded classes of society. I found, when medical officer of a district very near the sea, that scrofula prevailed to a fearful extent, although the farmers and labourers were well fed; yet that was the very place to which parents having children affected with scrofula would be inclined to send them for cure."

I have more than 24 per cent. of scrofula in my own private practice; I think you have more scrofula here than you ought to have; so long as you keep children congregated together, so long will you have scrofula, whatever diet you give them. You cannot rely on dispensary statistics; they are fallacious and deceptive. Dispensary patients are a very fluctuating class of people; the best statistics are those of a fixed population.

Too stimulating diet has a tendency to produce scrofula, as well as too poor diet; scrofula is the preponderating disease in this house. There is a large marsh to the rear of the house, distant half-a-mile; the site of the house is not well drained; it might be improved by carrying the drainage to the Douglas river. The present hospital is well managed, so far as cleanliness and medical attendance are concerned, but it is defective in every requisite.

When it was first proposed to build the workhouse on this site, I reported against it; I reported that the house would never be free from ague and fever. The same vitiated air which, in a concentrated form, produced fever, and caused off seven of the guardians who sat in this board-room, produces blood-poison in a less concentrated form, and that blood-poison produces scrofula.

My opinion is, that the physician is the physician of the healthy man as well as of the sick. His object is to prevent the healthy from getting sick, and therefore no question of food or diet in any shape or form should be entertained without being first submitted to the medical man.

Edward R. Townsend, M.D.,  
13, Monticini's Quay.

J. R. HARVEY, being duly affirmed, saith:—I do not attach much importance to dispensary statistics. Talking of scrofula in general terms, was so vague that, from any statistics of it, unless the question, "What is scrofula?" was first decided, it was utterly impossible to judge of it, unless you had some means of definite compensation; there was an immense quantity of scrofula in the districts which the dispensary doctors never saw, and never would see.

If Dr. Callahan examined, as Dr. Townsend and I did, every individual case in this house, I will be prepared to enter into comparison with him, but not otherwise. I could not have given a tabular view of the per centage, unless I had gone over every individual case, and entered them down in writing; I was astonished at the extreme healthiness of 90.0 of the classes of children. There are some extremely bad cases of scrofula in some of the wards.

In addition to the causes mentioned by Dr. Townsend, I would say that, continued low temperature, especially when combined with damp air, is a frequent cause of scrofula.

J. R. Harvey.

D. C. O'CONNOR, M.D., being duly sworn, saith:—I was Physician to the Cork Union Workhouse from its foundation to the year 1816. Scrofula at all times prevailed in the house; to a great extent in the commencement. I can't state the per centage during that time. I beg to remark, that workhouse statistics are most fallacious and illogical. In proportion as the general comfort of the people in the country improves, the proportion of sick to healthy in a workhouse is likely to increase by the decrease of the healthy. In 1814, the number of children from two to 16 years of age in this workhouse was 1,197; at present it is 464. I account for the decrease in numbers by the going out of a great number of healthy people, the sick remaining behind. There never were so great facilities for young people getting out of the workhouse as for the past three years. I do not feel any apprehension, if the guardians and the public do their duty, that a single healthy individual need remain here after 15 years of age.

The several causes of disease to which children of 15 years of age must be subject in a workhouse are, overcrowding. From 1847 to 1852, the numbers generally in this building were over 4,000; it is not fitted to contain more than 2,500. In the day rooms of the infant wards, where the infants and their mothers passed the day, there was scarcely room for them to stand; that was during the years 1847 and 1848. I have seen the boys in their dormitories lying in bed so thick that it was impossible to walk through the dormitory without treading on them. In 1849, cholera raged here; an epidemic of scarlatina raged here on three or four occasions; small-pox also extensively; an epidemic of measles two or

three times; so that it is next to impossible that a child could attain to its fifth or sixth year in this house without going through all these diseases, owing to the impossibility of separation. For a considerable time the diet of all classes was reduced to a low standard. All the circumstances I have mentioned are recognised by medical men as the leading exciting causes of scrofula. On that account, I am not surprised to find the disease more prevalent among the adult children than the infant classes. My colleague and I were alive to this state of things; it was in consequence of representation on this subject that two large buildings were constructed at a cost of 3,000*l.* For the same reason it was recommended, and adopted, to take a farm separate from the house; a farm of 20 acres was then taken at some distance from the house. The farm was subsequently surrendered. We also procured an improvement in the dietary about the year 1844. For five or six years subsequent to the year 1847, the influence of myself and colleague in the management of the house was annihilated; we were laughed at; we got scarcely any assistance either in the house or out of it, the pests about money matters was so great; even the peas were absent. For some years past there has been a disposition on the part of the guardians to be more generous to the poor. From 1847 to 1854 the diet was very bad, bad in quality, and insufficient in quantity. My colleague and I reported the matter to the guardians and the Commissioners; the latter, on one occasion, enforced the adoption of our suggestions. Before the famine, the Board was generous; afterwards we went a little too far. I consider them as good as any board of guardians in Ireland.

If the workhouse site be unwholesome, every place in Cork is unwholesome. Intermittent fever does prevail in the vicinity of Cork, but a place may be judged from the rarity of the disease, and I find it rather easily cured here. The sewerage has always been a source of trouble and expense here. The Male Hospital was never deemed suitable, it was never built for hospital purposes, and was always disapproved of; the wards are bad, and there is a large wall to the back which prevents ventilation. The building of a male hospital on the high ground would be very beneficial.

Scrofula prevails to a fearful extent amongst the children of the poorer classes in this city. I have had great opportunities of judging, and I can say that scrofula prevails to a great extent amongst the poor; it is a subject medical men never speak of to the upper classes, but it unfortunately prevails amongst them too; many amongst the upper classes die without ever knowing what they die of. One-fourth of the inhabitants of London die of internal scrofula; I include consumption, and everything that external scrofula means; when people speak of this place, they forget it is registered misery here, but unregistered misery outside. It would be well if people looked after misery outside; I send many persons to hospital here; I this week received a letter from a young man, pouring blessings on me for having sent him into the workhouse hospital. I have no reason for knowing that scrofula prevails in Cork more than in other towns of Ireland. It is a painful truth, that half the children who are born die before they arrive at the age of two years. I do not think that the children outside, except those of the better class of tradesmen and farmers, are better fed than those here. Potatoes have not a tendency, *per se*, to prevent scrofula. I think it most desirable for general health to have vegetables, but for scrofula they have no effect; many persons confound scrofula with scrofula when talking of vegetables. I would not say that the monastery schools are a good criterion of the prevalence of scrofula; scrofula prevents many from going to school; you should ask the children, have they a brother at home with it. It would be just as if I met the healthy children from this house walking on the road, and then that inferred that there was no scrofula in the house.

Children are sometimes born with scrofula; after two years of age it attacks the external glands, the neck, &c.; after 15 years of age the disease becomes internal. If you ask a medical man what is the best diet to prevent scrofula, he will tell you a good strong diet—meat every day. A poor diet with a person living in a natural state, would be better than the most sumptuous fare in a workhouse. I do not think that the diet the children from two to nine get here would engender scrofula; children in a workhouse cannot be as healthy as those living outside; children in a workhouse would require better food than children outside to keep them in health. Dr. Popham and I put the most liberal construction we could on sickness in this house; when we found anything the matter with the inmates we registered them as sick.

I think it has been a great misfortune that there has not been a good convalescent diet, quite independent of hospital registry. As regards the present diet, I would not trouble myself about the variety, if the quality was good. As regards giving the inmates meat, I can only answer, it would benefit them much if they got it; I would give it to them every day if I could. I am not here to settle that, let it be settled by the Commissioners, the guardians, and the public. When I had charge of the workhouse hospital, there were a large number of persons on hospital diet, though not hospital patients, and I had cause to regret having put them back on house diet. I felt myself under no obligation with reference to the diet of able-bodied paupers, because the responsibility was taken off my shoulders. The Commissioners consider themselves as well able to judge of the kind of diet for able-bodied persons as we could be, and they were perfectly right; and when we did occasionally interfere, we were told by some of the guardians that it was not our business; that our business was to look after the sick, consequently we had no obligations in the matter, except if we thought that any particular diet produced an ill effect on the inmates, we had liberty, with sanction of the Board, to make an alteration, which alteration should be sent to the Commissioners for their approval; but we should have some special reason

for

for interfering with the diet of the able-bodied. I think that the children from two to five years of age ought to get new milk, and not skimmed milk. I disapprove of brown bread for any class, and I do so on principles of economy, as well as on the ground of health. Doctors differ on this point; I have read the opinion of some medical men as to the component parts of brown bread being more nutritive than white, and if the human stomach was a laboratory, it would be all well; but if the mill will separate the component parts, it is better to let the mill do it, than to have it done in the boy's stomach. The boys would do anything to get the white bread; living has something to do with digestion, besides there is greater difficulty in baking brown bread. Again, there is the impossibility of detecting the quality; the first requisite of diet is, that its quality could be easily detected; you can test the white bread readily with the eye and nose; you have no means of testing the brown bread.

There is one other remark I wish to make; it is in reference to potatoes. It will be the greatest misfortune to the inmates of this house that befel them since the famine, if potatoes became again the general diet of the house. If used, as in England, merely as a vegetable, it would be all very well. They are not as nutritious as the food they are getting at present, and then there is the impossibility of testing their quality; one class of potatoes contain once and a half as much nutriment as another; then you have to dispose of the offal, which will vary according to the quality of the potato. There was a time when the same parties were contractors for supplying potatoes, and also for taking away the offal. In instances, half was taken away in offal; the worse the quality of the potato, the greater the quantity of offal. The worst potatoes in Cork were those supplied to the workhouse. I would consider it desirable that potatoes should be used in the porridge or soup; when I say, I disapprove of potatoes, I refer to them as an article of diet; when I was connected with this house, the soup was good.

There is a regulation of the Commissioners I would wish to see altered; I never had a quarrel with the Commissioners; on the contrary, I have a very great respect for them; I look upon the separation of mother and child at two years of age as inhuman. It was enforced here very often to my great annoyance. I must say the Assistant Commissioners were always anxious to evade the rule; the rule ought not to exist; there ought not to be separation between mother and child, until the latter is six years old. I also think that the mother ought to have a frequent intercourse with her male and female children, even after they are separated in the schools. I derive great assistance from a mother's inspection of her own child. It is necessary for me to inspect a child frequently, but no one can detect the beginning of disease in a child so well as its mother can. I deem it indispensable, both for keeping up the affection between the parent and the child, which may afterwards relieve you of the burden, and also for saving the child, because the mother will protect it from the commencement of the disease. I don't think it desirable to have in-door labour for any child under 15 years of age. It does not do to set a boy down to a tailor or shoemaker at 12 years of age; the rooms in which they work are bad or close, at least if they be the same which were in use when I was here; what little he learns make him only a lather, and not fit for the trade. What is wanted is, out-of-door play or work; there ought to be a playground for the children. I do not put so much stress on food; I tell you that you are going wrong, if you devote your entire attention to diet; I have observed a tendency in all classes in this house, to make fat and not muscle; to engender muscle, what you want, is play and work; I am aware that vegetable diet tends to create fat more than muscle, and that what is wanted to develop muscle is animal food, but at the same time exercise is necessary. If you tie up your arm for a month you will have very little muscle on it; I think it is a very great mistake not to have more ground attached to the house; I think a playground would be of immense advantage; what you want is enjoyment and happiness, which will cost you nothing. I do not think it is right to put logs on children while young; if the two, I would rather spare them to go without shoes.

In my opinion orphans should be moved out of the house until six years of age, and able to contend with the system of a workhouse. I think that widows with two or more children might get, say, 2s. 6d. a week, which would enable them to support themselves out of the house; the country is now in such an altered condition, that a revision of the Poor Law system is desirable. The general management of the Cork workhouse may bear comparison with any institution in the country.

DEAR CHIEF, O'CONNOR, A. E. N. D. P. Q. V.

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

T. Bredie, Poor Law Inspector.

JOHN PORHAM, being duly sworn, saith:—I am Senior Medical Officer of Cork Union Workhouse; at present I have in hospital 48 girls from nine to 15; of those, 22 are cases of scrofula, and 26 of other diseases; of those 25, two are children under five, and not strictly belonging to my department. One is the child of a woman who is in hospital from syphilis, and three came in from town lately with scrofula.

In the convalescent and infirm school there are 28 cases, of which about one half are healthy, and fit to be discharged into the healthy school. Of those 28, four are scrofulous—three having the disease in the glands of the neck, one very slight. In the healthy school

there was one case of cured scrofula; of the 22 in hospital, nine have glandular swelling of the neck, four of those are not ulcerated. Four have it on one hand or arm; one is a case of "carum origi;" five have it on two parts of the body, and two are cases of general scrofula. The total deaths in the house for the last five-and-a-half years, were 3,293; of those, 103 died from scrofula, that gives one in 31. I have analysed those 103 deaths; 11 were under five years of age (six males and five females); from five to nine, three males and five females; from nine to 13, 14 males and nine females; from 13 to 19, 12 males and nine females; from 20 to 30, nine males and 13 females; and from 30 onwards, three males and 10 females, giving a total of 47 males and 56 females. The number of deaths from scrofula, during the same period, amongst children under 15 years, was 41, viz., 23 males and 18 females; the next thing was to ascertain the duration of those 41 children in the house; 24 were under 12 months in the house, three under two years, and 14 over two years.

I have taken the mortality of children under two years of age for the last two years. In 1858 there were 103 deaths; in 1859 there were 53.

Of the next class of children, from two to five years of age, there were 21 deaths in 1858, and eight in 1859.

Of the class from five to nine, there were nine deaths in 1858, and three in 1859.

Of the class from nine to fifteen, there were 10 deaths in 1858, and 19 in 1859.

Proportion of infant deaths to the whole mortality is one to five and three-fifths; and the proportion of deaths of children, of all ages, to the whole mortality is as one is to three and two-thirds.

In alluding to scrofula, I think water is a most important cause. I have in those bottles samples of the pump-water which has been used in the house up to the present day; and of the pipe-water now being introduced into the house.

The doctor tested the waters; in the former, lime existed in large quantity; the latter was pure.

The presence of lime in water is an important fact, as regards scrofula; for, on analysing scrofulous tumours, we find salts of lime in their substance. In Switzerland there is a disease called "goutte," a swelling of the glands of the neck; this disease is found in districts where the inhabitants use hard-water. It is found that this disease prevents the development of internal scrofula; and I would say, that the prevalence of external scrofula in this house prevents the development of internal scrofula. In Sologne, in France, where the vegetation is derived from silica, scrofula is not found.

Dr. Stokes, of Dublin, has remarked that when the disease is too violently attacked by curative means, the lungs get affected. There is another fact; a consumptive woman, when nursing a child, is apt to give it scrofula; and, on analysing the mother's milk, it is found to contain lime in abundance, which affords a strong reason that consumptive females, or those with a tendency to it, ought never to nurse.

I now come to some other causes of scrofula in this house.

First, as to point of situation:—

Dr. Callahan stated that there was no disease in this house but scrofula, arising from its proximity to a bog. I speak from experience, that cases of ague, in great number, have arisen from its proximity to the bog. There is no outlet for the sewerage of the house, and on passing this day through Fitton's field, I saw large open cess-pools with putrefying matter in them; this field adjoins the workhouse.

The next point to which I shall allude is the confined air of the house. The house is surrounded by high walls, which necessarily prevent free ventilation in the lower apartments, and the children, when kept in the lower buildings, are exposed to this malarious influence.

There is another cause, light; we know that solar light has a great influence in preventing deformity. One of the ablest physicians in Paris, M. Andral, has stated that the cases of rickets in the hospitals of Paris come from narrow streets with lofty houses.

I am of opinion that the workshops in the upper building are, from want of light, injurious.

I agree with the mayor that the boys, who, I am told, are kept there some hours in the day, should be allowed more into the open air.

I have an objection to infirm children being kept long at school; I think that three hours a day is too much for that class, and I would suggest a shorter period.

In judging causes of scrofula, we must take into account hereditary or parental influence; workhouses are frequently inhabited by children of the lowest and most sickly parents, and I do not think we can arrive at the truth by comparing the children of a workhouse with those of any school in Cork.

Dr. Combe has observed, "If the children of any workhouse are contrasted with those of even a common country school, their physical and moral inferiority is seen to be well marked; and in the expression of enjoyment peculiar to early age, the difference is still more striking."

I need hardly say there are a number of children in this house, the offspring of syphilitic mothers, and many of them have been in a low state of health. Among the causes ascribed to the production of scrofula among parents, intemperance is one. If we look to the children, they are liable to the epidemics of measles, scarlatina, and small pox, which are well known to be productive of scrofula: they leave the constitution debilitated.

I now come to another point—ventilation. The younger, the more need it has of air. From the crowded state of this house at times, many of the children must have suffered from this cause. As an instance of the injurious effects of vitiated air on the health of children,

seen, I may mention that in a boys' school in Norwood, where they were well fed, scrofula prevailed amongst them: it was supposed to arise from the diet. Dr. Annot was called in to ascertain the cause, and traced it to want of ventilation. The late surgeon Carmichael, of Dublin, was called in to ascertain the cause of scrofula in the Bethesda school, and he found it to arise from the children being kept in the school-room after school hour, instead of sending them out to play. On inquiry, it was found that the schoolmistress was in the habit of embarring the diet, but that she sent the children out to play. She was removed, and a new schoolmistress appointed who gave the children the food, but confined them to the house; and it was from that time the disease began.

Now, as to the influence of the diet of the house on scrofula, I argue thus:—A single cause ought to be invariably followed by an effect. If diet was the cause of scrofula, it ought to exist wherever the diet was the same as here. The statistics of union workhouses show that this is not the case.

As regards vegetable diet, 100,000,000 of the human race live almost exclusively on rice; and so far as we can ascertain, scrofula does not prevail to any great extent amongst them. I certainly would wish, and am of opinion, that new milk ought to be given to the children; and with respect to the adult class, I would suggest the addition of some animal food. I consider that a bread and milk diet contains all the staminal elements of food, if they be of good quality.

With regard to potatoes, much may be said for and against. They hold a very low scale as an article of food in comparison with bread; in fact, they are by some authors supposed to be a cause of scrofula.

I do not attribute the scrofula in this house to the dietary. If they got the same diet outside, they would not get scrofula.

The quantity is sufficient if the article be good. Dr. O'Connor and I had frequently to object to the quality of the food. Milk is an article we have had frequently to condemn, and the Master was directed to have it analysed by Dr. Blyth. Dr. Townsend and I made a report to the Board about twelve months ago, recommending an improvement in the dietary: it was adopted by the Board. The recommendation was, that the children should get one and a-half pound of white bread, and one and a half pint of new milk daily.

Inquiry adjourned to eleven o'clock on Monday.

Dr. POPEHAM re-examined: In 1864 we recommended that the infirm diet should be, for males, one and a half pound of bread, and one quart of milk; for females, a proportionate decrease.

As a general rule, our reports were adopted by the Board. I have no immediate recollection that any of our suggestions were refused to be acted upon. We were seldom called to task, except to show a reason to the Board.

I wish to mention a matter which I omitted in my evidence on Saturday.

The total number of sick admitted to the workhouse hospital from 25th March 1867, to 25th March 1869, was 9,418; total deaths, 471; by dividing the mortality into the number of sick it gives a ratio of nearly one to eleven.

I do not recollect that I was ever snubbed by the Board for having made a report; I have been allowed the fullest latitude in giving assistance to the sick.

Some of the children, from nine to fifteen, have been in the house since the famine, and, in my opinion, the famine has left an indelible impression. The diet of the children, from nine to fifteen, is more varied than the diet of children from two to nine, and equally nutritious in quality; I do not consider that my department is over-crowded; the ventilation is sufficient; I have been frequently through the male hospital; the lower wards are very objectionable, in consequence of having a high wall behind them; the same objection does not apply to the upper wards; I don't consider the lower wards a suitable place for scrofulous patients; if they were put in the upper story of the same building it would be a better arrangement; the scrofulous patients require the best air, the best food, and the best treatment. At the time the Mayor visited the house, all my scrofulous patients in hospital were getting meat, potato, white bread, &c. In the infirm we had another class on bread and milk. As to the general quality of the food, I should pronounce it good; there were exceptions; we have frequently reported about the bread; the milk, during the summer months, has been frequently bad, and returned to the contractor; other milk was substituted. I have examined the vegetable soup; I cannot say that I saw any great change in it from time to time; I never saw less vegetable in the soup than lately; this is a bad season for vegetables.

I am in favour of improving the diet; I consider that the children have a sufficient diet to sustain them in health, but I would be glad to get them a better diet; I recommend that a better diet should be given, and I think the aged and infirm should get tea; they had tea for a long time, they have it not now; we considered at the time that good milk was more nutritious. There are 150 girls under my charge, and 28 of them have more or less of scrofula. I observe that Dr. Cusiman gives a larger number, but he did not use either pen or pencil, he merely looked at the cases; the consequence is, he represented that there were 38 cases of scrofula in my ward, while in reality there were only 22.

A person may have scrofula, and die of other disease. People labouring under scrofula have deteriorated constitutions, and go off more rapidly. A person coming in, though

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labouring under scrofula, would, as a general rule, if he died from any other disease, be entered as having died of that disease, and not of scrofula. I do not consider the bad water as the sole exciting cause of scrofula, but one of the combination of causes, to which arithmetical value has been assigned, in order to mark the respective proportions. I do not include deaths from consumption, tabes mesenterica. Pulmonary consumption is not frequent here; there have been cases of ague; it does not prevail very much lately. This house is not remarkable for fever; there has always been scrofula in this house; several kinds of disease are cured as rapidly here as in any other hospital; the cases that are permanently in the house cannot be sent out of the house for change of air, and are consequently exposed to the influences likely to perpetuate it.

I don't remember the dietary to be under the Commissioners' minimum scale. I think it desirable to improve the dietary of the children; I am not prepared to say that I would recommend meat three times in the week, but I would recommend animal broth. If you expose children to the influence of bad air, bad water, and close confinement, their diet is not of much importance; but if you alter other things, then it would contribute to an improved sanitary state. A celebrated French surgeon was of opinion that the English had more scrofula than the French, although the former was fed on beef-steaks and porter. The children should have open-air exercise; they have to pass through four or five epidemics. I cannot exactly tell what is the space between the beds in hospital; it is at least three feet. We have ventilation; wherever a number of sick persons are congregated together, the air becomes vitiated. I was greatly in favour of the plan proposed by Mr. O'Brien, Poor Law Inspector, namely, the erection of an hospital on the site of the wooden building, it being more elevated and free from the influence of surrounding agencies.

There are at present four children in the Lock Ward, the offspring of syphilitic mothers; I cannot say what is the proportion of illegitimate children.

It would be desirable that children should be left with their mothers up to five or six years of age. I am of opinion that the present diet is sufficient, and the proof is, that there are children in the house since infancy who have received no other diet, and they are healthy. I consider the diet to be sufficient to keep them in good health, surrounded by the unfavourable circumstances already described.

There is no connexion between ague and scrofula. I agree in the necessity of improving the dietary of the children between two and 15.

There is a difference of opinion about the nutritive properties of white bread and brown bread; the white is better adapted for invalids, because the brown irritates the bowels, and is laxative in its effects. I think the amount of nutriment is sufficient for boys leading a sedentary life, but not sufficient for boys working in the open air; in consequence of muscular exertion, they require a better description of diet.

I do not want to impugn the testimony given by the dispensary doctors; they can have their own opinions; but I have been a dispensary doctor myself, and ought to have considerable experience, and that experience leads me to the conclusion that many who have the disease not fully developed, may have it in a latent state.

John Popleton, M.D.

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.

WILLIAM FITZMAURICE, Master of the workhouse, being duly sworn, saith:—I had frequent cause to complain of the provisions, and had a great deal of trouble in getting the contractors to supply articles according to sample; there were some contractors with whom I had more trouble with than others; with some a note to them was sufficient; when articles were bad, the general practice was to send them back and get others, or purchase articles in their stead, and charge the difference in price to the contractors. I have made written reports to the Board; made report on the 7th October and 25th November about the milk. Orders were made by the Board on the reports. I have made other reports, copies of which I take here to hand in. Whatever articles of food I was ordered to dispense, I always dispensed fairly and conscientiously. I think the giving out of the provisions is sufficiently supervised to enable me to state that the purveyors get what is intended for them. Some time after I came here, a good deal of my time was occupied with people coming to me, saying their bread was not weight. The master baker was anxious to show a large return of loaves, and the loaves were often light. I directed that scales should be placed on each dinner table, and every ration of bread weighed, and any that were found to be deficient in weight, were made good from broken bread.

The soup, so far as the ingredients, is generally good of its kind. On the occasion of Dr. Callahan's visit here, the soup was wretchedly bad. I can assure you, that knowing the soup was, before that day and since, equal to what you have seen, I did suspect some foul play. When Dr. Callahan called for a sample of the soup, I sent for it, and I suspected that some of the vegetables were taken out of it on its way from the kitchen. I subsequently made inquiry, and found that on that very morning two or three of the fire bars gave way, so that the soup was not half boiled. There was, at times, a scarcity of cabbage, and soup does not make any great show without it. The sample of the soup which was produced here on Thursday last was a fair sample of the soup generally used in this house;

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I have often seen it much better. I never saw "cairagnes" or black beetles in the soup, but one may have got into it; it might occur in a gentleman's private cookery. I frequently knew the boys not to take their soup, and asked the reason, and was told they did not care about it; I never heard them complain of the quality of the food. I have known the girls to leave their milk; streibout has been left. The house has during my time been overcrowded; it is not so now. I would like to see the children's hospital not so crowded; I should like to see the male hospital with not so many in it. The health of the children under fifteen years of age, who came into this house during the past twelve months, was generally good; there are, of course, exceptions. I think there are more children coming in delicate on their re-admission than at first; the mothers are so anxious to go out, they take the children with them, put clothes on them that had not been worn for a long time, and not so warm as the house clothing; they take them out in wet and cold, and they come back with coughs, and their eyes running and tender.

For the last two years there were 65 healthy boys and 30 healthy girls, under the age of fifteen, taken out of this house; of course they selected the healthy children.

The water was generally insufficient, and I never considered it good.

The sewerage is as good as any establishment, if it had an outlet.

The perry accommodation is defective, and was always an abomination. I attribute a good deal of the ill-health of the house to the perries; the portable perries have to be carried every day, and sometimes twice in the day, through the yards, leaving a very unpleasant and disagreeable effluvia; they are emptied into a cesspool outside the boundary wall.

When I sent back articles to the contractors, their excuse always was, that they were paid very low prices; the contractors have taken contracts at prices which could not pay them; when they complained, I told them they had to blame themselves.

I have no doubt that the milk has been watered by the contractors; never in this house. The contract price for meat some time ago was 2½d. and 2½d. per lb.; we are now paying 3d. and 3½d., and we are getting it of good quality. I was always in favour of having an hospital built on higher ground.

I consider the food sufficient to keep the children in health, provided they relish it.

I do not believe that four-fifths of the children of this house die before they become adults. I do not know an officer of this house who has not had his period of sickness, and who has not had to apply for leave of absence. I have received every assistance from the house committee.

I should be glad that the infants got first quality bread.

I never issued what could be called unwholesome food to the workhouse inmates.

The medical officers frequently reported the meat as being bad.

W. Fitzmaurice, Master,  
Cork Union Workhouse.

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

\* T. Bradie, Poor Law Inspector.

D. J. MURPHY, storekeeper, being duly sworn, saith:—From 1853 to 1855, the food was of inferior quality; in 1856 we had not much trouble with it; the Indian meal has occasionally been bad; the only way we have of testing it, is by making it into streibout; when reported bad by the cook, we send away the remainder of the meal.

The meat has been very inferior.

For the last six months the milk has been good. The bread was occasionally bad from February last, to the close of Mr. Helen's contract.

The price paid for meat was 2½d. and 2½d. per lb. Since they began to pay 3d., the meat has been good.

The meat was inspected by the house committee on Mondays, and when found bad, was sent back.

D. J. Murphy.

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

T. Bradie, Poor Law Inspector.

ROBERT J. O'SHAUGHNESSY, being duly sworn, saith:—I have been for the last 12 years acting as clerk of Cork Union. I have frequently, and constantly gone through the house. In my opinion it has been as well managed as any other workhouse in Ireland, and the wants of the inmates cared for, so far as the regulations admitted. The guardians here, in every instance, exceeded the Commissioners' minimum scale of dietary; I have received returns from several of the large workhouses in Ireland, and find by comparison, that our dietary is superior. I am quite sure that the condition of the inmates of the Cork workhouse will bear comparison with the inmates of any of the large workhouses, near a large town. I do not allude to rural unions. In my opinion, the present comparison of sick with healthy, is

badly fit to this house; within the last three years, a very large number of healthy children have been taken out of this house; of the class, 407 have been taken out; of these the guardians assisted by money grants to buy clothes, 216 boys and girls; nearly the entire of these children were orphans, and would have remained here for life, had they not been so assisted. I attribute the large number to the "Benevolent Apprenticing Society," which brought prominently before the public, the excellent moral and physical condition of the workhouse children.

I have frequently seen the diet of the children in this house, and of its kind it has almost uniformly been good. I never saw the vegetable soup so bad as it was on the day of Dr. Callinan's visit. Dr. Callinan called my attention to several pieces of bread that he took off the table; they were very bad, much worse than I generally see them. Samples of the bread and milk are laid before the house Committee every Monday; whenever any inferiority was perceived, it was remarked upon, and directions given in each case. I have always thought that the diet for the children should be improved, and that they should get meat; that they should get more exercise, and have a regular play-ground. I am not aware how many healthy children come in during the last two years. I attribute the better health of the girls to their having a play-ground, and to the greater cheerfulness which pervades their school.

I do not think there is a large amount of illegitimacy in this house. I believe that some married women come in here and state that they are unmarried, lest they should be required to prosecute their husbands.

*R. J. O'Shaughnessy.*

Clerk of the Cook Union.

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Bradie, Poor Law Inspector.*

WILLIAM C. TOWNSEND, being duly sworn, saith:—I have been connected with this house for the last two years and some months. I have under my charge the children from two to nine years old, males and females, the mutes and imbeciles; also all the boys and male adults. I find by a careful examination made by me on the 21st May, that there are in, boys and girls from two to nine, as follows:—

In nursery, 22; in school, 80, healthy; infirm, 5; in hospital, 43; making a total of 157.

I classify them as follows:—Of the 43 hospital cases,

- 11 are suffering from scrofula.
- 5 from sore heads.
- 11 from ophthalmia.
- 6 from hooping cough.
- 10 delicate.

Of the five infirm, three are afflicted with sore head and two with itch.

In my department there are 158 boys from nine to 15; of these 55 are healthy, 27 infirm, 41 in hospital. Of the 41, there are 21 cases of open scrofula, 12 cases of stumous ophthalmia, two cases of sore head, one case of itch, five delicate.

Of the 27 infirm patients, three had stumous ophthalmia, seven scrofulous marks, seven sore heads, delirium four. The total number of sick, infirm, and healthy under my care between two and 15 years of age, boys and girls, amounts to 315. Of these 315 there are classed from two to nine healthy, 160; from nine to 15 healthy, 90; total healthy, 190; leaving a balance of 115 who are suffering from open scrofula, stumous, ophthalmia, or latent scrofula. Out of the 115 classed as healthy, 29 are labouring under scrofulous marks and chronic ophthalmia.

The average number of years in the house of the sick under my care, from nine to 15, is five years and a-half. When I came here I found a great many labouring under scrofula, and it took me some time to arrive at conclusions. I find that the children seeking admission during that time are decidedly healthy. I have been for some time looking for the cause of disease in this house, and I may mention that the only disease we have in this house, to any extent, is scrofula. There are many causes to which it might be ascribed, bad water, sewerage, crowding, low situation, want of change from place to place, want of family ties, has been alluded to as causes, and with that opinion I fully agree. Scarceness and poverty of diet form a principal ingredient, and I am the more convinced that I have come to a correct conclusion from the mass of evidence given on this inquiry. It convinces me that the fact of those causes being in existence imperatively demands a very high class of diet. I do not think it sufficient that boys and girls between five and 15 should be supplied with such an amount of food as would be sufficient for the expenditure of their system; such a dietary would not, in my opinion, keep them in what I may call vigorous health; on the contrary, it would reduce their bodies into that state that they would easily become victims to disease, and, if a hereditary taint exist in the system, it will readily be called into action; it produces a tendency to rickets.

The quantity of food at present is sufficient, but I think they ought to get new milk and white bread, meat twice or three times a week; and I am opposed to meat soup without getting the meat with it. Liebig says, that "fish possesses a greater nutritive power than all

all other kinds of food, in fact, the blood considered as a whole, has the same composition as flesh; in flesh, therefore, we have one of the first elements for the production of blood.<sup>17</sup>

I am of opinion that, to give the meat without giving the fluid in which it is boiled, is robbing the party of a very essential ingredient, and I carry that out in the male hospital, where I direct them to give the soup as well as the meat. I had made up my mind to bring the subject of the diet before the Board; I did not do so, simply because I could not make a report on it without experience; I came in here a new officer; for many months the feeling has been growing on me that the diet was not suitable; I have noticed that the children in the Infant School were a healthy class, and I beg to confirm, to a great extent, the report of Drs. E. Townsend and Harvey as to that class; I find that as they grow older they deteriorate; even amongst the girls, those from nine to 15, are much inferior to the class from two to nine. I consider the boys, taken altogether, as a miserable set, ready to glide into disease, and, if a better description of diet be not given, I have no hesitation in stating that a large amount of scrofula will be developed amongst them before the close of a year. I did not communicate this to the house committee or to the Board; I did not mention it to the Mayor until he was in the house; I told him that, in my opinion, the diet was quite unfit for the proper development of the children; I said I thought it engendered disease; I cannot say if the Mayor asked me for my opinion, but I have no hesitation in saying that I would have given it to him even if he had not asked me; I looked upon it that, with the exception of the sick in hospital, or if there was an epidemic in the house, the medical officer had nothing to say to the general dietary of the house; if I thought the general dietary of the house was such as to engender disease, I would deem it my duty to bring it before the Board; I did not do so in this case, because I considered that time and experience were necessary to enable me to form an opinion which would carry that weight which I might expect would influence the guardians in making a change of such importance.

I recollect on one occasion, some time after I was appointed, being sent for to the Board-room, when tenders were about being considered, and although I was sent for to give my opinion, a guardian, if I don't much mistake, ordered me to be turned out, while I was giving my opinion. I would not be afraid of making a report to the guardians. I would not allow children with different diseases to be put in the same bed; but there has been considerable over-crowding, and reports were frequently made of it. I have been obliged to put two boys, and frequently two men, to sleep in the one bed. The male hospital is quite unfit for the purpose; it is very badly constructed. The ground floor is very objectionable. It is surrounded by a wall about thirty feet high; there are draughts enough, but no ventilation; on account of the draughts the windows cannot be opened; there are no nurses' rooms—no water-closets—no baths. With regard to the hospital food, since I became connected with the house, until the 26th March last, I never saw a decent bit of meat brought into it. I reported the quality of the meat over and over. The contractors were bound to supply good meat. I answered how can you get good meat at 2d. per lb. when it is 6d. in the market. A better description of meat was taken for the officers. On the 26th of March last, I asked Mr. O'Brien, Poor Law Inspector, to use his influence to get a contract taken at a proper price. I made a personal canvass of some of the guardians, and implored them not to take contracts at such prices as forced the contractors to scour the country to get meat of that inferior kind.

The new milk is generally good; the skimmed milk is sometimes of a very inferior description. For some months past, the milk supplied has been very fat; about a year ago it was so very bad, that I applied to the house committee to have it submitted to Professor Blyth to be tasted, and if necessary, to prosecute the contractor. The bread has been occasionally bad; I talk of white bread and brown bread; at present it is good; about six months ago, it was so bad, that a good deal of the flour had to be returned to the contractor.

We used to get arrow-root at 2½d. per lb.; you may easily suppose it could not be very good for that. I sent it away; with regard to the soup, I think it was a fair article of the kind.

I must say that I have always found Mr. O'Brien, Poor Law Inspector, willing to assist me; and I bear willing testimony to the able manner in which he discharges his duty.

I knew nothing of the Mayor's Report until I saw it on the day it appeared in print. I am aware that several cases of scrofula broke out in the house within the last twelve months or two years. There are scattered through this house in the able-bodied, infirm and hospital wards, a number of boys who have been discharged from school within the last four or five years. Some of them are sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen years of age. They are not classed with the boys. I look on these as the development of the system; the children at an early age thrive, they deteriorate from nine to fifteen, and finally they become wretched; there are about forty or fifty of this class in the house; they decidedly bear out the deleterious effect produced by long residences in the house.

I do not consider that the diet at present in use, is sufficient to keep the children in fair bodily health.

I stated that I had a growing conviction of the necessity of some change in the diet of the establishment, and I said to some of the guardians that, "we are all morally guilty, if we do not make some arrangement about the children in the house;" still I had not sufficient experience of workhouses, to justify me in making a formal complaint of the matter.

The reason why I did not give a better class of diet to the scrofulous patients not in hospital, was, that I had no power to do so, unless I placed them in hospital; I have no doubt a better class of diet would have served them.

I had never read No. 3 of Article 68 of Workhouse Regulations; the guardians have always been of opinion that the province of the doctor was exclusively to look after the hospital, and to attend to the sick. Dr. O'Connor, a very old medical officer of this house, and Dr. Popham, its present senior medical officer, both made statements similar to what I have made; besides, I can plead in excuse that I had not workhouse experience, and ignorance of its rules and regulations.

It would be very desirable to do away with the clogs.

*W. C. Townsend.*

Sworn and acknowledged before me,

*T. Brodie, Poor Law Inspector.*

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COCK UNION WORKHOUSE.

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ABSTRACT RETURN.

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COPY of the Return of the Inspectors appointed to hold an Investigation into the State of the Cock Union Workhouse, in the Months of April and May 1840, and of the Evidence taken before each Inspector, and of Correspondence relating thereto.

(Mr. Burt.)

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Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,  
23 April 1841.

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*Tinder B. 62.*